

THE INTERNET AND THE PUBLIC IN SOUTH KOREA:
ONLINE POLITICAL TALK AND CULTURE

BY

JEONG-HO KIM

DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Communications
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2012

Urbana, Illinois

Doctoral Committee:

Professor John Nerone, Chair
Professor Clifford Christians
Professor Nancy Abelmann
Professor Andrew Pickering, University of Exeter

Abstract

This dissertation is an ethnographic study of online political talk and its culture in South Korea. In this study, I examine the action and culture of online-talk participants from the insider's perspective. My main argument is that online political talk has given rise to the subjectivity that characterizes a new type of the public, which I name the *simin* public. I use *simin* as the term to refer to a South Korean conception of citizenship.

In demonstrating the rise of a subjectivity of the *simin* public, I first identify and characterize a central practice of online-talk participants: a social role that I term citizen polemicism. This role refers to a set of actions of judging public matters, offering such judgments in public, and arguing with fellow citizens. Then, I investigate what moves quite a few citizens to engage in citizen polemicism and why the voice of the citizen polemicist is considered to be a legitimate public voice. In answering the former question, I argue that citizen polemicists are morally motivated public communicators. In inquiring into the latter question, I claim that the legitimacy of the citizen polemicist's voice depends on the voice's embeddedness in open, critical, and common sense-oriented discussion. Lastly, I identify a main culture—which I call the culture of thininking together in public—that frames online political talk in general, which centers on the interactions between the citizen polemicist and its audience, but is not reduced to them. In this culture, online-talk participants are willing to think together about public matters in a public place and in a critical manner. The thinking-together-in-public culture leads online-talk participants to form shared understandings and judgments about public matters and further to produce collective political discourses.

This dissertation explores two additional research issues: how the Internet has contributed to the rise of the *simin* public and how individual citizens are transformed into members of the *simin* public. In examining the former issue, I argue that the Internet not only provides ordinary citizens with new opportunities for and new abilities of political communication, but also shapes and nurtures specific types of communicative actions, new desires and interests with regard to political communication, and online-talk participants' understandings of their communicative actions and themselves. In investigating the latter issue, I emphasize the importance of political imagination—exemplified by the role of *simin* in the rise of the *simin* public—which builds upon an association between the social and communication technology.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: Three Models of the Public: John Dewey, Hannah Arendt, and Jürgen Habermas.....	39
Chapter 3: Communication Power without Authority and Political Communication without Power: The South Korean Context of Online Political Talk.....	72
Chapter 4: Citizen Polemicism in South Korea: The Internet and a New Social Role in Public Communication.....	99
Chapter 5: Citizen Polemicism as an Avocation: Passion, Self-Presentation, and Civic Mission.....	126
Chapter 6: Bringing Common Sense to Politics: The Citizen Polemicist's Voice and its Legitimacy.....	164
Chapter 7: Thinking Together in Public: A Culture of Online-Talk Participants.....	196
Chapter 8: Conclusion.....	232
References.....	248

Chapter 1

Introduction

On April 17, 2008, President Lee Myung-bak of South Korea—who was inaugurated in February 2008—decided to re-open a South Korean market to American beef. The South Korean government banned imports of American beef in 2003 after a case of mad cow disease was found in America. Even though the government eased the ban in 2006, it allowed imports only of meat from cows younger than thirty months except for bones and other materials that were suspected of carrying the disease. But Lee decided to ease most of these restrictions on the eve of his summit with President George W. Bush in Washington, D.C. He hoped that his decision would contribute to improving relations with the Bush administration and to encouraging the United States Congress to ratify a free trade agreement that the two governments reached in April, 2007 (Choe, 2008). In the process of making a decision to resume American beef imports, however, Lee and his administration did not make any efforts to sound out public opinion or to seek South Korean citizens' understanding. The deal that the South Korean government agreed to, moreover, had less rigorous safeguards against the dangers of mad cow disease than the deals that the American government had reached with other countries.

President Lee's decision to lift a five-year ban on imports of American beef infuriated many South Korean people. Public opinion surveys showed that a majority of South Koreans opposed this decision. Tens of thousands of people began to hold candlelit vigils in Seoul, protesting against American beef imports. It was not long before these vigils spread to other cities and the number of their participants expanded to hundreds of thousands of people. President Lee and his administration were bewildered by these unexpected mass demonstrations. In reacting to the protests, on the one hand, they took back their initial position on the beef issue. Lee sent government officials to Washington, D.C., in order to ask the American government to prevent exports of beef from cattle aged thirty months or more; he apologized on national television for failing to communicate with people; and the entire cabinet, the prime minister, and all the top aides to Lee submitted their resignations. On the other hand, the South Korean government used the police force. Police dispersed the protesters with water canons and arrested them. The candlelit vigils, nevertheless, continued to take place on a near daily-basis for more than four months.

One of the most conspicuous characteristics of these candlelit demonstrations was the diversity and heterogeneity of its participants. They, many news reports said, consisted of demographically different types of people: for example, mothers carrying babies in prams, middle- and high-school students in their uniforms, career women wearing high heels, businessmen wearing suits and ties, parents holding hands with their children, young couples, Buddhist monks, catholic nuns, college students, blue-collar workers, white-collar workers, pensioners, and small business owners. According to news media, they also had a wide range of different grievances against President Lee's decision to resume American beef imports. Some demonstrators had fears of mad cow disease. Others disliked Lee's authoritarian style of leadership. Others had national sentiment, criticizing Lee for making too many concessions to the United States. Still others opposed a free trade agreement and new liberalism. The beef protesters were thus heterogeneous except for the fact that Lee's decision triggered their taking to the streets.

The *New York Times* reported that it was difficult to identify the main force behind the candlelit vigils in South Korea (Choe, 2008). It is not surprising if one considers the diversity and heterogeneity of the demonstrators. In fact, many reports said that there were no major organizers of the candlelit demonstrations. On July 4, 2008, Amnesty International dispatched its investigator, Norma Kang Muico, to South Korea to look into the police's human right violations against the beef protesters. After she conducted a two-week-long investigation, she said in her interview with the Korean vernacular newspaper *Hankyoreh*:¹

It's a wonderful expression of people power, at the most organic level. It just grows on its own. It doesn't have leadership. It doesn't have specific political groups leading it: [for example] trade unions, university students, or normal [and] traditional leaders of any protests. [It's] very peaceful demonstration. It's remarkable to see so many different types of people. All ages, backgrounds, [and] gender[s] are represented at the vigil. I think that way it's quite nice to see it. (Heo & Muico, 2008)

In addition to the diversity and heterogeneity of the demonstrators, as she observed, the non-existence of leading organizations was another characteristic of the beef demonstrations.

¹ According to the *Hankyure Shinmun*, she was born in South Korea and lived there for twenty-one years until she left the country. In recent years, as an investigator of Amnesty International, she has visited South Korea every year to check the state of human rights in the country.

Even though most beef protesters were not members of any movement groups, they were by no means dissociated from other protesters. In a remark that the *New York Times* quoted in its report, a South Korean political scientist said that “most demonstrators are just ordinary people networking through the Internet and spontaneously and voluntarily joining the rally” (Choe, 2008). Many news media reported similar observations about the demonstrators. Many protesters participated in the beef demonstrations with their fellow members of the online communities or forums to which they belonged. Figure 1-1 testifies to such a characteristic of the demonstrations. It is one of the pictures that the *Hankyoreh* took in Seoul on May 31, 2008. In the picture, several demonstrators were holding South Korean national flags. At the center of the picture, there is another flag that reads “토론의 성지” (Toronui Seongji)—which means the “holy place of discussion” in Korean—in smaller characters and “아고라” (Agora) in larger characters. *Agora* is the name of the biggest online forum (<http://agora.media.daum.net/>) in South Korea, which is a sub-site of a major portal site, Daum. In addition to *Agora*, numerous online communities and forums were the main sources of networks to connect the beef demonstrators.

In fact, the resistance to the state and mass demonstrations in civil society are hardly novel in South Korea.² Sociologist Hagen Koo (1993b) has described the state-society relations in contemporary Korea as follows: “despite the state’s unusual strength and pervasive presence, civil society in the South [of Korea] has never been completely stifled but has always demonstrated a subversive, combative character” (p. 232). While the country was under the rule of the authoritarian military regime, political struggles usually took place in the street. These street demonstrations contributed, to a great extent, to the democratization of the country (Armstrong, 2008; Cumings, 2005; S. Kim, 2000, 2005). The authoritarian government not only repressed civil society by restricting the basic rights of citizens like freedom of speech and the press, but also restrained political society by excluding opposing politicians from political society or by limiting the activities of opposing parties (see Cumings, 1997; S. Kim, 2000).³ This

² In this study, the term “civil society” refers to the sphere—relatively autonomous from the state—where citizens form and express their values, ideas, and solidarities. Comparative political scientists Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan (1996) provide a more specific definition of the term: the “arena of the polity where self-organizing groups, movements, and individuals, relatively autonomous from the state, attempt to articulate values, create associations and solidarities, and advance their interests” (p. 7).

³ Political society can be simply understood as the sphere for political activities of professional politicians. Linz and Stepan (1996) define political society as the “arena in which the polity specifically arranges itself to contest the legitimate right to exercise control over public power and the state apparatus” (p. 8). This arena includes “political parties, elections, electoral rules, political leadership, interparty alliances, and legislature” (p. 8).

compulsory reduction of political society led opposing politicians to engage in political struggle outside political society. These politicians built their own political networks and organizations, and they resisted the authoritarian regime together with other anti-government social groups such as student movement groups and religious organizations (see Clark, 2005; Lee, 2005). These anti-government groups organized street demonstrations and mobilized ordinary citizens. In addition to political democratization, economic equality and justice became another central issue of South Korean protest, since the authoritarian military government's economic-growth-first policy had led to rapid industrialization and growing economic inequality (Abelmann, 1996; Haggard and Moon, 1993; Koo, 1993a, 2005; Lee, 2007; Lie, 1998). Social movement groups of farmers, the urban poor, and workers came to the fore in opposition to authoritarian rule. These groups sought to organize farmers, poor urban residents, and workers, and to mobilize them for demonstrations and strikes. In short, political organizations and social movement groups led most demonstrations that took place in South Korea during the rule of the authoritarian regime.

South Korea's transition to democracy—which began in 1987—energized, at first, the traditional movement groups, because it contributed to opening *political opportunities* for social movement (S. Kim, 2003).⁴ Yet, as procedural democracy was institutionalized, the roles and influence of the movement groups in civil society began to be weakened and marginalized (Seong, 2000).⁵ Since democratization had restored political society, political organizations designed for political struggle in civil society were absorbed into political parties. The main issues of social movements have changed from protest against the authoritarian regime to policy advocacy (S. Kim, 2000; Seong, 2000). Student movement groups and religious organizations, therefore, lost their leadership in social movements (Lee, 2005). Labor unions turned into interest groups as they were institutionalized as legitimate economic organizations. In addition, the

⁴ For the concept of political opportunities, see McAdam (1982), and Tarrow (1998).

⁵ Since the collapse of the authoritarian regime in 1987, South Korea has experienced a rapid political turn toward democracy. Indeed, democratization—more specifically, electoral democracy—in South Korea looks more successful than in any other newly democratizing Asian country. Since 1987, five consecutive presidents have been elected under the same rules of the game. When Kim Dae Jung of the *National Congress for New Politics* party won the 1997 presidential election, South Korea became the first new democracy in Asia in which political power was peacefully transferred to an opposition party. Electoral democracy, in short, has become secure in South Korea (for a rather emotional description of the development of electoral democracy in South Korea, see Hahm, 2008). Elections have become free, fair, and highly competitive, and basic civil liberties have been guaranteed. The development of democracy in South Korea becomes evident in the change of category that it occupies in Freedom House's classification of political regimes. South Korea was ranked as a "partly free" country until 1987-1988. But, since 1988-1989, it has been classified as a "free" country. Despite this success of procedural democracy, however, South Korea's politics has been considered to fall short of a consolidated democracy (see Armstrong, 2008; Im, 2000, 2004; B. Kim, 2000; Seong, 2000).

expansion of political society has transformed a number of main figures of the traditional social movement groups into members of political parties. With the transition to democracy, consequently, street and contentious politics was replaced by party and electoral politics in South Korea.

This does not mean, however, that civil society's resistance and street demonstrations have disappeared in South Korea. While democratization has led to the decline of the traditional movement groups, it has, at the same time, brought about new forms of social movement groups—sometimes called non-government organizations—which address various social and political issues such as human rights, economic democratization, environment, and anti-corruption (Abelmann, 1996; Armstrong, 2005a; S. Kim, 2000, 2005). Even though these new movement groups, unlike the traditional movement groups, have made much effort to win media attention and public support through staging media events, street rallies have remained as important activities of the new movement groups. Labor unions and other interest groups have also taken to the street from time to time in order to protect and increase their class or group interests. In short, civil society's resistance and demonstrations have been central factors to characterize South Korean politics. The resistance and demonstration in civil society have been initiated and led by social movement groups and interest groups. In this politics of civil society, most ordinary citizens—who do not belong to any of those groups—have been politically passive and disconnected actors, even though not socially disconnected, as the objects of mobilization by social movement groups.

Unlike this traditional form of the politics of civil society in South Korea, the beef demonstrations showed a new type of actor: politically active ordinary people embedded in online communication. The first beef candlelit vigil was initially proposed by a high-school student on the Internet. The information about the candlelit vigil quickly spread out to a large number of people through the Internet. Many protesters joined the candlelit demonstration together with members of their online communities and forums. After participating in the candlelit vigil, they posted online their opinions about the demonstration and the pictures they took during the demonstration. They exchanged their information, experiences, feelings, and images about the candlelit vigils with their fellow members—who include not only participants but also non-participants in the candlelit vigils—on their online communities and forums. In this process, participants in the beef demonstrations were combined with people who did not

participate in the demonstrations but engaged in online talk about the beef issue. These off-line and online protesters also discussed news stories about the beef demonstrations. When they thought some newspapers were biased against the demonstrations, they organized protests against the news media. They shared online a list of companies that put their advertisements in those supposedly biased news media, and they called on the companies to stop doing so through posting messages on the companies' websites and making phone calls to them. More than ten companies yielded to this protest, promising to withdraw their advertisements from the newspapers. In addition, these politically active Internet-users protesting American beef imports conducted an online campaign to collect money for the beef candlelit vigils. They spent the money on purchasing candles and bottles of water for the demonstrators and by putting their advertisements opposing the American beef imports in newspapers. These advertisements were published under the names of online communities and forums. In short, behind the beef candlelit vigils were these ordinary people who engage in online communication about current affairs and issues.⁶ Their off-line participation in the collective action of the candlelit vigils was just the tip of the iceberg of the online interactions and networks.⁷

Research goal and argument

The beef candlelit demonstration is not the first event that revealed the rise of Internet-based politically active people in South Korea. Rather, these politically active citizens are considered to have played a central role in a number of political and social events: for example, the 2000 general election (French, 2000), the Anti-America candlelit demonstration in 2002 (Kang, 2009; Song, 2007), the 2002 presidential election (Lee, 2004; Rheingold, 2003; Watts, 2003), the 2004 general election, and the scientific misconduct scandal of Dr. Hwang Woo Suk from 2005 to

⁶ This is not to say that any other social and political force such as social movement groups and political organizations did not play any roles in the beef candlelit demonstrations. If one wants to examine the details of the beef demonstrations, one should take into consideration the roles of those groups and organizations. Few people, however, would be able to deny that ordinary people embedded in online communication were central parts of the beef demonstrations.

⁷ The importance of communication groups and networks for collective action is expressed by John Adams' remark about American Revolution that Hannah Arendt quoted in her book *On Revolution* (1990/1963): "'the [American] revolution was effected before the war commenced,' not because of any specifically revolutionary or rebellious spirit but because the inhabitants of the colonies were 'formed by law into corporations, or bodies politic,' and possessed 'the right to assemble...in their town halls, there to deliberate upon the public affairs': it was 'in these assemblies of towns or districts that the sentiments of the people were formed in the first place'" (p. 118). For a historical case study of the influence of communication groups and networks on collective action, see Gould, 1995.

2006 (Hauben, 2007).⁸ Quite a few researchers have reported these changes in politics and public communication—which are called the rise of participatory democracy or grassroots journalism—that the Internet has brought about in South Korea (Chang, 2005; Gillmor, 2004; Hauben, 2007; Kim & Hamilton, 2006). Even though the rise and influence of politically active South Korean citizens embedded in online communication are widely recognized, few studies have been conducted to investigate the features of these new communicative and political actors.

The goal of my research is to contribute to understanding the characteristics of Internet-based politically active people in South Korea. It is important to emphasize that not all sorts of Internet users are these newly emerging politically active citizens.⁹ A large number of Internet users remain passive political actors who are not different in political attitude and action from pre-Internet ordinary citizens. These politically passive Internet users get their information about public issues online and sometimes express their opinions through public polls conducted on the Internet. They, however, hardly engage in online political communication among their fellow citizens. Unlike these Internet users, the politically active Internet users gather on Internet sites such as online communities and forums, blogs, or news media sites, exchange information about current issues, and discuss those issues and related news media messages. In order to explore the characteristics of the Internet-based politically active citizens, therefore, it is necessary to examine their online communicative actions.

In recent years, a number of empirical studies have been conducted on a newly emerging communication phenomenon: online political talk. Some researchers have tried to test political effects of online political talk and to identify the factors that influence such online communication and its political effects (see Cappella, Price, & Nir, 2002; Hardy & Scheufele, 2005; May & Gastil, 2006; Min, 2007; Polletta & Lee, 2006; Price & Cappella, 2002; Price, Nir, & Cappella, 2006; Wright & Street, 2007). However, much academic discussion revolves around the quality of online political talk: more specifically, whether or not current online communication contributes to building participatory and deliberative democracy.

⁸ It is necessary to note that these politically active citizens embedded in online communication do not determine South Korean politics. Traditional political actors and factors are still powerful in explaining and predicting South Korean politics. There is, however, no doubt that the Internet-based politically active citizens have become an important factor that influences South Korean politics.

⁹ Although much journalistic and academic writing lump together Internet users as political actors through the term *netizens*, it is necessary to distinguish Internet users who engage in online political talk from Internet users as audiences of online news media.

The rise of online political talk has been expected to rectify one of the central problems of modern democracy: the lack of political conversation among ordinary citizens in public places (Browning 1996; Gimmmler, 2001; Negroponte 1995; Rheingold, 1993; Poster, 1997). Some empirical studies have shown that current online political talk attests its democratic potential (Hauben & Hauben, 1997; Papacharissi, 2004; Sachs, 1995; Stromer-Galley 2002; Srinivasan & Fish, 2009; Tanner, 2001). Quite a few researchers, however, have challenged such positive expectations and evaluation of online political talk (Barber, 1997; Davis, 1999, 2005; Fung, 2002; Hagemann, 2002; Jankowski and van Selm, 2000; Schneider, 1996; Siapera, 2004; Sunstein, 2001; Wilhelm, 2000). Eugenia Siapera (2004) and Anthony Wilhelm (2000) criticized actual online political talk for its lack of interaction or reciprocity, which is a central element of conversation.¹⁰ Some political communication researchers have emphasized that democracy-enhancing political talk are not limited to a narrow range of talk (see Katz, 2006; Kim, Wyatt, & Katz, 1999; Mansbridge, 1999; Wyatt, Katz, & Kim, 2000). These researchers have argued that even casual and spontaneous political talk in private places contributes to democracy. Yet many scholars have believed that democracy requires particular types of political talk, which are called “public use of reason” (Kant, 1991/1784), “deliberation” (Bohman, 1996; Fishkin, 1991; Gutmann & Dennis, 1996, 2004; Habermas, 1996/1992, 2006), or a “problem-solving model of conversation” (Schudson, 1997). From this perspective, many researchers of online political talk have examined whether actual online political talk is the type of talk required for democracy, contending that current online political talk does not conform to the ideal standards of democratic talk. They have pointed out the limitations and problems of current online political talk in functioning as a democratic form: the concentration of the contribution to discussion in a small number of participants (Davis, 1999; Hagemann, 2002; Hindman, 2009; Jankowski & van Selm, 2000; Schneider, 1996); the lack of civility (Davis, 1999); polarization and homophily (Davis, 1999; Sunstein, 2007); the dominance of strategic discourse over practical discourse (Fung, 2002; Siapera, 2004); or the lack of rational argumentation (Hagemann, 2002; Wilhelm, 2000).

These empirical studies criticizing the current state of online political talk have concentrated on analyzing messages posted on certain sites designed for political talk. In

¹⁰ Unlike studies by Siapera (2004) and Wilhelm (2000), quite a few studies found that online political talk shows a high level of interactivity or reciprocity (see Hagemann, 2002; Sachs, 1995; Tanner, 2001; and Tsaliki, 2002).

particular, many of these studies have focused on the frequency and proportion of messages oriented to and required for democratic talk: more precisely, deliberation (see Davis, 1999; Hagemann, 2002; Tsaliki 2002; Wilhelm, 2000). Such analyses of online messages have revealed that the Internet sites for political talk are not dominated by talk and discussion that conform to the ideal requirements for deliberation. That is, these analyses have shown the limitations of the change in political communication that the rise of online political talk has been expected to bring about.

These analyses, however, are not enough for understanding actual online political talk. They are concerned with how dominant democratic talk is in Internet sites for political talk. What they directly show is the quality of Internet sites for political talk with respect to the degree of the dominance of democratic talk. This does not necessarily indicate the quality of actual online political talk due primarily to two reasons.

First, it is necessary to recognize that the Internet is, not only in principle but also in practice, open to any Internet user. Internet sites for online political talk are open to even people—for example, spammers and trolls—who neither regard themselves as members of an online site for political talk nor want to communicate with other participants. These people can easily access an Internet discussion site and post their messages. In fact, they tend to post multiple short messages, which do not have meaningful information or arguments. As an Internet site for political talk becomes popular, the number of online messages posted by people like trolls and spammers tends to increase on the site. Such messages are considered one of the primary problems in online political talk by administrators and participants in Internet discussion sites. Hence, the existence or dominance of online messages that do not conform to requirements for democratic talk may stem from the fact that Internet sites for political talk are open to anyone, rather than from the fact that online-talk participants are not oriented to democratic discussion.

Second, even though the frequency and proportion of online messages conforming to ideal standards required for deliberation are lower and smaller than those of online messages not doing so, this does not necessarily support negative evaluations of current online talk. Most participants in online political talk neither read all messages nor follow all the threads.¹¹ They try to pick and choose messages or threads that are interesting and valuable to them. Thus, if online-

¹¹ It is widely accepted that attention is a scarce resource (see Davenport & Beck, 2001; Lanham, 2006). Online-talk participants, therefore, cannot pay attention to every posting. In fact, my informants said that they had not read all messages and comments on the web forums that they regularly visit.

talk participants seek democratic talk, a majority of participants can still engage in such online talk, despite the fact that online messages oriented to democratic talk are not dominant on an Internet site. In short, it is important to note that online-talk participants can separate wheat from chaff. For example, on an Internet discussion site where one hundred messages—each of which receives, on average, ten comments—per day are posted but only twenty of them conform to standards required for deliberation, a large portion of participants can engage in democratic online talk and form rational public opinions through these twenty good messages.

Online-talk participants' sense of their online messages and communication, therefore, may differ from the researchers' evaluation based on their analyses of the messages on Internet sites.¹² In fact, some studies focusing on online-talk participants have reported that the participants are exposed to diverse views and engage in active and critical conversation (see Hauben & Hauben, 1997; Sachs, 1995; Stromer-Galley, 2003; Tanner, 2001).

In this respect, it is important to investigate online political talk not from the perspective of an external observer of online sites designed for political talk, but from the insiders' viewpoints. Researchers of online political talk should explore what meanings online-talk participants develop about their online political communication rather than examine the frequency and portion of the types of messages required for deliberation. Online-talk participants' meanings about online political communication refer specifically to online-talk participants' understandings, emotions, intentions, and expectations with regard to their communicative actions. These understandings, emotions, intentions, and expectations build upon the interaction between online-talk participants' experiences, feelings, and desires regarding online political talk, on the one hand, and their conceptualizations and imagination about the political talk, on the other hand.¹³ The latter includes worldviews—such as self-understanding, social categorization, and beliefs—and systems of values and ideals. The meanings of online communicative action and the factors constructing such meanings can be called the culture of online-talk participants.¹⁴

¹² A South Korean online-talk participant, a man in his late forties who works for a small clothing company, told me in an off-line social gathering of members of a web forum, *Seoprise*, that 60 percent of messages posted on the forum were trash. Nevertheless, he was attached to the forum and proud of the fact that he was communicating with other members on the forum. He said that "I want to get respect through my essays in the sea of *Seoprise*."

¹³ This interaction can be expressed as "the dialogue of sense and reference" in anthropologist Marshall Sahlins' phrase (1985, p. 156) or as the interplay between "the thinkable and the unthinkable" in cultural historian Robert Darnton's expression (1991, p. 36).

¹⁴ For various concepts of culture, see Griswold (1994), Hall & Neitz (1993), Kuper (1999), Sewell (1999), and Williams (1977).

The exploration of the culture of online-talk participants is crucial, not only because the culture shows the participants' consciousness of online political talk, but also because it characterizes their online communicative actions. Many scholars of culture have argued that culture frames and shapes human actions (see Bourdieu, 1978/1972; DiMaggio, 1994; Geertz, 1973; Sen, 1990/1978; Swidler, 1986; Warner, 1978; Weber, 1992/1930). In fact, some cultural sociologists have demonstrated the importance of the culture of political talk by showing that the culture influences citizens' participation in political talk and their ways of talking (see Eliasoph, 1990, 1998; Perrin, 2005; Polletta & Lee, 2006). Human actions, moreover, embody culture, in the sense that "the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to his behavior" (Weber, 1968/1922, p. 4). In this line of thought, anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) called human action "symbolic action—action which, like phonation in speech, pigment in painting, line in writing, or sonance in music, signifies" (p. 10).¹⁵ As he showed through a case of a wink, the nature of an individual human action is, in large part, determined by the meanings that the action carries, rather than the action itself. Human actions, therefore, cannot be understood and evaluated without exploring the meanings of the actions and the factors constructing such meanings. From this perspective, the explanation of the culture of online-talk participants is necessary for understanding their online communicative actions.

My research explores the communicative action and culture of the South Korean citizens who engage in online communication about contemporary affairs and public issues. I illustrate the online-talk participants' daily actions—which are both communicative and political—and the meanings attached to the actions. The goal of my research, however, is not just to describe those daily actions and meanings. Through investigating the action and culture of the South Korean online-talk participants, I identify the online-talk participants' particular set of ways of thinking and feeling that frame and shape how they act on a daily basis, how they understand their daily experiences, and what meanings they attach to their actions and experiences.

By a set of ways of thinking and feeling I mean an inner state of historically and culturally specific human actors: more precisely, the ensemble of their prevalent motivations, sentiments, conceptual frameworks, beliefs, identities, morals, and hopes that they feel and

¹⁵ For a view of human actions as speech acts, see Ricoeur (1971).

recognize, even though not completely and clearly, in their everyday lives.¹⁶ Since these ways of thinking and feeling are felt and recognized, they are constructed and transformed through a series of interactions among human actors' experiences, reflective thoughts, communications, and practices. Since they are continuously constructed and transformed, their set is not a monolithic state. Human actors' sets of ways of thinking and feeling, therefore, cannot be reduced to their social positions and identities, their unconscious deep structures of mind, or macro cultural systems and ideology.¹⁷ Raymond Williams (1961, 1977) captured this dimension of the social by the term "structure of feeling."¹⁸ In recent studies of culture, human actors' different sets of ways of thinking and feeling have been conceptualized as "subjectivities" (see Biehl, Good, & Kleinman, 2007; Good & Good, 2005; Holland & Leander, 2004; Kleinman & Fitz-Henry, 2007; Lave, Duguid, Fernandez, & Axel, 1992; Ortner, 2005; Probyn, 1990).¹⁹ This can be called a cultural concept of subjectivity, as opposed to philosophical, psychoanalytical, or discursive concepts of subjectivity (see Biehl, Good, & Kleinman, 2007; Ortner, 2005).²⁰

In short, the main goal of my study is to explore the (cultural) subjectivity of the online-talk participants in South Korea: in Raymond Williams' terms (1961, 1977), the "structure of feeling" of the online-talk participants. Since these new communicators are a new type of

¹⁶ Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor (2004) has suggested the term *social imaginary* in exploring Western modernity. It refers to ordinary people's common understanding—which is factual and normative—that "make possible common practices and a widely shared sense of legitimacy" (p. 23). He describes *social imaginary* as "the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations" (p. 25). What Taylor tries to capture by *social imaginary* is a central part of what I mean by *a set of ways of thinking and feeling*. Unlike the former, however, the latter includes not only cognitive and normative elements but also affective elements like feelings and desires of human actors.

¹⁷ In chapters 12-17 of *Rhetoric II*, Aristotle used the term "ethos" for referring to this set of ways of thinking and feeling. For conceptual and empirical studies of this dimension of the social, see Bellah et al. (1985), Darnton (1984), Geertz (1973), Ginzburg (1980), Gould (1995), Jacobitti (1996), Schudson (1998), Sennett (1998), Weber (1992/1930), and Willis (1977).

¹⁸ In exploring the concepts of culture, Williams (1961) identified a "felt sense of the quality of life at a particular place and time: a sense of the ways in which the particular activities combined into a way of thinking and living," which he named "structure of feeling" (pp. 47-48). He (1977) specified structure of feeling as follows: "affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought; practical consciousness of a present kind, in a living and inter-relating continuity" (p. 132).

¹⁹ Also see Geertz (1974) and Willis (1977). Quite a few researchers have used "selfhoods" or "personhoods" rather than "subjectivities" (see Cahill, 1998; Callero, 2003).

²⁰ See Fiske (1987/1989), Mansfield (2000), Rorty (2007), and Seigel (1999) for other conceptions of subjectivity or selfhood.

political actors, my goal can be described as exploring a new form of citizenship embedded in online political communication.²¹

In studying the subjectivity of the online-talk participants in South Korea, I intend to contribute to understanding the communicative and cultural changes in politics that are taking place with the rise of online communication. Recent empirical studies of online political talk among ordinary citizens have failed to make sense of such actual changes. Their failure stems, in part, from their research goals. As previously indicated, existing studies of online political talk can be divided into two groups according to their research goals. The main research goal in the first group of studies is to analyze the potential effects and causal factors of online political talk and discussions. Researchers investigating these issues aim at discovering causal relationships and mechanisms, rather than exploring actual political changes enabled by the Internet. The central research goal in the second group of studies of online political talk is to explore whether the Internet functions as an ideal space for political communication: more precisely, the public sphere for deliberation. This research issue is related to examining actual changes in political communication. Its focus, however, is limited to a narrow aspect of such changes: whether such changes show the rise of political talk that conforms to ideal standards for deliberation. Researchers exploring this research question have demonstrated the limitations of the political changes that are taking place with the rise of the Internet. These research goals in existing studies of online political talk, however, have diverted attention from the nature and characteristics of the actual, even though not ideal, changes embedded in online political talk. Unlike these previous studies, the aim of my study is to contribute to identifying and characterizing the communicative and cultural changes in politics that the rise of online political talk among citizens has brought about in South Korea.

²¹ The term *citizenship* has been used as two different concepts: “citizenship-as-legal-status, that is, as full membership in a particular political community; and citizenship-as-desirable-activity, where the extent and quality of one’s citizenship is a function of one’s participation in that community” (Kymlicka & Norman, 1995, p. 284; see, for the various conceptions of citizenship, Heater, 1990; Isin & Turner, 2002; and Somers, 2005). Many studies using citizenship as the first concept have focused on the nature and types of legal status—in other words, rights—that citizens have or should have (see Marshall, 1992/1949). From this perspective, British media researcher Peter Golding (1990) has argued that communication should be one of the central rights of citizens. The concept of citizenship-as-rights has been dominant in political and academic discourses of citizenship. In recent years, however, the second concept of citizenship has come to the fore in studies of political philosophy and modern politics. These studies investigate what citizens should do and seek for good politics or good life: in short, the nature of good citizenship or civic virtues (see Beiner, 1995; Mouffe, 1992). From this perspective, Swedish media and journalism researcher Peter Dahlgren (2000b) has explored the relationship among media, civic culture, and citizenship. The concept of citizenship as civic virtue is relevant to my study. The goal of my research, thus, can be described as exploring what civic virtues South Korean citizens have developed in engaging in online political talk.

More specifically, my study is to explore change in the subjectivity of the South Korean citizens who engage in online political communication. This is the same change as Raymond Williams (1977) described regarding change in structures of feeling. He characterized change in structure of feeling as “a social experience which is still in progress, often indeed not yet recognized as social but taken to be private, idiosyncratic, and even isolating, but which in analysis (though rarely otherwise) has its emergent, connecting, and dominant characteristics, indeed its specific hierarchies” (p. 132). The subjectivities of human actors consist of multiple, heterogeneous, and contradictory elements that resist being explained by a coherent story (Alexander, 1983/1994; Ortner, 2005). My goal is not to describe every element that constitutes the subjectivity of the online-talk participants in South Korea. Rather, I focus on newly emerging elements—which I believe are the central ones of their subjectivity—connected with the Internet. It is important to emphasize that these elements are not fully developed yet, but still in the process of growth. They moreover do not exist in a pure form. Nevertheless, I aim to identify and characterize an emergent form of the subjectivity of the South Korean online-talk participants through exploring the ambiguous and complex state of their action and culture.

The central argument of my study is that the action and culture of online-talk participants in South Korea show the rise of the subjectivity that characterizes a new form of the public, which I name the *simin* public. The term *simin* 시민 is used, in Korean, to refer to citizen—in other words, common people as political subjects who bear civil and political rights.²² I however use *simin* as a term to mean a particular South Korean conception or imagination of citizen.²³

²² In South Korea, *simin* is not the only term to refer to common people as political subjects. They are also called *minjung* 민중 or *kookmin* 국민 (for the concept of *minjung*, see Abelman, 1996; Lee, 2007; Lie, 1998; Wells, 1995). These three terms highlight different aspects of common people as political subjects. *Minjung* is a class-based concept. In this concept, common people are basically characterized as economic producers. This concept, thus, can be used to refer to common people in a pre-modern society as well as in a modern society. When *minjung* is used to refer to common people in a modern society, it means a confederation or alliance of different oppressed classes such as working class, the farmers, and the urban poor. This term began to be popular for radicals in the 1980s. *Kookmin* is a state-centered concept. It literally means members of the state. This term, therefore, is preferred by a government, particularly when it tries to mobilize common people or to gain support from common people.

²³ In studying the nature of citizenship, T. H. Marshall (1992/1949) focused only on a British case and, consequently, failed to examine other countries' cases. In challenging Marshall's study of citizenship, Michael Mann (1987) and Bryan Turner (1992/1990) has argued that different societies had developed different conceptions of citizenship. From this perspective, they have attempted to identify different models of citizenship that have been developed in different Western countries. In the same line of thoughts about citizenship, I use *simin* as a term to refer to the South Korean view of citizenship. In my study, more specifically, the term *simin* carries not only the meaning of citizens as bearers of civic and political rights but also the South Korean conception of these citizens.

This conception represents the historical experience and social and political conditions of South Korean citizens.

The term *the public* has three main different notions in its contemporary usage. The first notion of the term is citizens as a collective body who constitute a political community. This notion is found in such terms as a South Korean public or a French public. Second, the public is used as a term to refer to audiences of public speech or cultural artifacts such as books, movies, or concerts. In the third notion, the public refers to democratic citizens. Democracy requires ordinary citizens to have certain political capabilities, attitudes, and values that are necessary as judges of political issues or selectors of political leaders. For example, citizens should actively participate in politics. They should also be informed enough of political affairs. In addition, they should be seekers of the common good, rather than their individual interests. Citizens with these qualities required for democracy have been called the public. This notion of the term is found in discussion about the decline of the public in modern society.

In many contemporary political studies that use *the public* as a word to mean democratic citizens, the term refers to citizens who are highly interested in political issues and actively participate in a political process. For my study, however, I use *the public* as a term to refer to a more specific type of politically active citizens, who have three main characteristics. First, their political participations are not based on their material interest. That is, they are not the political actors who primarily seek their economic self-interest or class interest through political participation. In this sense, politically active seekers of individual or group material interest cannot be categorized into the public. Second, citizens called the public in my research participate in a political process as independent judging subjects, rather than as members of social and economic organizations or political sects. Third, their political participation is not restricted to activities expressing political preferences such as voting, public poll, or collective action; rather, they exchange political information and opinions and discuss political issues. That is, they share communication networks and engage in political communication with their fellow citizens for forming shared understanding and reaching agreement. In my study, thus, the public is not so much a collection of politically active solitary citizens as political companions consisting of independent judging and communicative subjects (see, for this form of the public, Arendt, 1958; Dewey, 1954/1927; Habermas, 1989/1962; Walzer, 1987; 2002). In this notion, the public is contrasted not only with politically apathetic citizens in terms of political interest

and participation, but also with the mass, crowd, class, or individual interest seekers in terms of both the nature of the motivation for political participation and the form of the relationship among citizens (see Arendt, 1973/1951, 1961; Blumer, 1946; Carey, 1997; Dewey, 1954/1927; Gouldner, 1976; Habermas, 1989/1962; Mills, 1956; Park, 1972/1904).

In explaining the rise of the subjectivity of *simin* public, I identify and characterize, first, a new form of public communicators—which I call *citizen polemicists*—who initiate and intensify online political talk among citizens. By citizen polemicists I mean public communicators who pass judgment on public matters and engage in arguments with fellow citizens. The exploration of citizen polemicists is important for making sense of the action and culture of the South Korean online-talk participants—who consist of not only citizen polemicists but also comment posters and readers—not only because citizen polemicists play a crucial role in online political talk, but also because they clearly reveal the culture and subjectivity of the online-talk participants. I then describe new communicative actions and motivations, social relationships, and political consciousness of online-talk participants in South Korea.

In investigating the communicative action and culture of participants in online political talk, one should not forget that their action and culture are embedded in online communication. These action and culture cannot be understood without considering how they are framed and shaped by the technological characteristics of the Internet. The second research goal of my study, therefore, is to explore how the Internet has contributed to the rise of the subjectivity of the *simin* public. In order to study this research question, one needs to conceptualize the relation between human and technological factors: more specifically the relation between citizens and the Internet. In the next section, I will discuss this issue and explain my approach, which I call the associated perspective of the relation between human and technological factors. In my study, I aim to specify, from this associated perspective, how the Internet has contributed to the rise of the subjectivity of the *simin* public.

In addition to demonstrating the rise of the subjectivity of the *simin* public in South Korea and describing how the Internet has contributed to this political and cultural change, my study has one more goal: to illustrate how ordinary citizens have been transformed into members

of the *simin* public through engaging in online political communication.²⁴ In this respect, my study contributes not only to understanding the political change that the Internet has brought about in South Korea but also to answering how the public comes into being. This issue is one of the central topics that John Dewey (1954/1927), Hannah Arendt (1958, 1990/1963), and Jürgen Habermas (1989/1962) have explored in their studies of the public, which will be examined in chapter 2. In comparison with these three scholars' ideas, therefore, I explore how ordinary citizens have turned into members of the *simin* public. In this respect, my study is in dialogue with Dewey, Arendt, and Habermas. I identify and explain what contributions the case of the *simin* public makes to understanding the transformation of individuals into members of the public.

Research Perspective: How should the relationship between humans and the Internet be conceived?

The rapid diffusion of the Internet has produced a large amount of literature about its political implications. In addition to the issues of revitalized public spheres and deliberative democracy, studies of which were reviewed in the previous section, Internet studies have examined various topics of political change, for example, informed citizenship, civic engagement, community and social capital, online political campaign, cultural identity, online journalism, digital divide, or global citizenship and the global public sphere.²⁵ These studies can be broadly classified into two groups according to their perspectives of the relation between the Internet and politics, more generally the relationship between technology and the human.

The first perspective has two related assumptions: first, the Internet has particular technological characteristics that are supposed to have specific influences on politics; second, political changes connected with the Internet are reduced to these technological characteristics. Researchers holding this perspective have attempted to identify what influences the Internet have on politics and to demonstrate whether the Internet has actual influence on politics. This techno-centered perspective can be found in much of the early writing about the political implications of the

²⁴ In my study, I focus on the transformation of individual citizens into members of the *simin* public, rather than on its newness as the model of the public. Hence, I make less effort to elucidate how the *simin* public is different from other models of the public such as Arendt's ancient Greek citizen public or Habermas's *bourgeois* public.

²⁵ For introduction of various research issues about Internet politics, see Axford and Huggins (2001), Bentivegna (2002), Bimber and Davis (2003), Boczowski (2002), Chadwick (2006), DiMaggio et al. (2001), Kopper et al. (2000), Luke (2006), Pavlik (2001), and Slack and Wise (2006).

Internet, which can be characterized as “the rhetoric of the technological sublime” in Carey’s phrase (1988, 2005). Based on the technological characteristics of the Internet—such as interactivity, immediacy, or the low cost of access to media—and early evidences of Internet politics, these essays have predicted that the Internet would transform modern politics (Browning 1996; Gimmmler, 2001; Grossman, 1995; Hauben & Hauben, 1997; Negroponte 1995; Rheingold 1993).

From the techno-centered perspective, another group of researchers have attempted to empirically identify the existence of political changes that the Internet has been believed to bring about. These researchers have observed the current state of Internet politics and evaluated whether such a state of Internet politics shows expected political changes (Cammaerts & Audenhove, 2005; Papacharissi, 2004; Xenos & Fort, 2005). Still another group of researchers taking the techno-centered perspective have sought an elaborate explanation of the Internet’s influence on politics. These researchers do not assume a simple and direct relationship between the technological characteristics of the Internet and corresponding political changes. Rather, they conceptualize the cause-effect relationship between the Internet and politics as consisting of multiple processes related to multiple factors. These multiple processes and factors build on the theoretical frameworks of the relationship between politics and communication or the models of human action, networks and society. Based on these complex theoretical frameworks and models, the researchers have attempted to elaborate how the Internet influences politics and to demonstrate such political influences of the Internet empirically (Bimber 1998, 2003; Welch & Fulla, 2005; Wellman, 2001).

In contrast to the techno-centered perspective, researchers taking the second, social-centered, perspective on the relationship between the Internet and politics argue that political changes associated with the Internet cannot be reduced to technological characteristics. They point out that the Internet’s influence on politics depends on how political actors develop and use the new technology. That is, even though the Internet has technological characteristics that can bring about political transformation, such potential cannot be realized without changes in political actors or structures. In this social-centered perspective, the Internet’s potential in political transformation is restricted to the fact that it provides political actors with certain political capabilities. The existing political structure and culture, therefore, play more important roles than the Internet in shaping political change associated with the Internet, because they

influence how political actors develop and use the Internet and who enjoys its technological benefits.

Some researchers holding the social-centered perspective have tried to show the limitation of the political changes that the Internet has been expected to bring about (Kenix, 2009; Margolis & Resnick, 2000; Marmura, 2008; Shapiro, 1999; Sunstein, 2007; Wilhelm, 2000; Zhou, 2006). Some of these researchers have attempted to demonstrate that the Internet does not change the nature of current politics. From this perspective, Michale Margolis and David Resnick (2000) have asserted, “There is an extensive political life on the Net, but it is mostly an extension of political life off the Net” (p. 14). Another group of researchers have explored the influences of human factors on Internet access and uses (Eastin, Greenber, & Hofschire, 2006; Kluver, 2004; Muhlberger, 2005; Stromer-Galley, 2000; Turner, 2006).

A strong version of the social-centered perspective, which can be called social determinism or social reductionism, sees the Internet not as an external determinant of society but as a mirror of society. That is, existing political power relationships determine how the Internet is developed and used. In this view, the Internet is less likely to improve or transform than to reflect or strengthen the existing political and social order—including political inequality, commercialism, or imperialism—in which it is produced and developed (Barber 1997; McChesney 1999; Schiller 1999; Scott, 2005).

Although the techno-centered and the social-centered perspectives present different ideas with regard to the direction and cause of political change connected with the Internet, the two perspectives share the same conceptual framework of the relation between human and technological factors. In this conceptual framework, technology and the human are separable factors with a cause-effect relation.²⁶ Causal factors are treated as given and constant in isolation from the other factors. Change or no change in politics is regarded as the outcome of influences by these causal factors. While causal factors in the techno-centered perspective are technological characteristics, central causal factors in the social-centered perspective are non-technological factors such as human actors’ practices, social structure, or culture.

²⁶ This conceptual framework—in which technology and the human are separable factors with a cause-effect relation—is found in many Internet studies that attempt to test political effects of the Internet by statistical analysis (see Bimber, 1999; Hlebec et al., 2006; Jennings & Zeitner, 2003; Shah, Kwak, & Holbert, 2001; Uslaner, 2004). These studies compare the differences in political knowledge and behavior between Internet users and non-Internet users. The differences between the two groups are considered the effects of the Internet.

It is doubtful that technology and the human are separable factors with a cause-effect relation. In fact, it is impossible to single out technological influences from actual social changes connected with technological change. Such technological influences are always associated with actions and ideas of human actors (see Bimber, 2000; Johns, 2002). These actions and ideas are not human actors' passive responses to technological change; rather, they are what human actors construct with their desires, intentions, and ideas, on the one hand, and under the constraints and influences of social structure and technology, on the other hand. That is, the influence of technology is always interconnected to non-technological factors.²⁷ The development, diffusion, and institutionalization of technology, moreover, are not autonomous processes but complex and multiple processes connected to social structures, cultural elements, legal and economic regulations, and human actors' actions and ideas. Technological factors, therefore, are not given and constant. They are shaped and changed by non-technological factors (David 1985; Enzensberg, 1970; Klein & Kleinman, 2002; McGuire, Granovetter, & Schwartz, 1993; Pinch & Bijker, 1987; Williams, 1992/1974). This fact, however, does not mean that technology is an additional factor in social change. Like technological factors, human factors are not given and constant either, because they are framed or constructed by non-humans factors. Technological influence is not limited to providing human actors with new capabilities. Technology creates new interests, desires, expectations, feelings, ways of thinking, social relations, or social actors, and embeds the human in those new social factors (Anderson, 1993; Benjamin, 1968; Carey, 1989; Dewey, 1954/1927; Eisenstein, 1980/1979; Innis, 1950, 1951; Latour, 1993, 1999; McLuhan, 1964; McLuhan & Fiore, 1967; Meyrowitz, 1985; Ong, 1982; Pickering, 2005a; Schivelbusch, 1986; Sommerville, 1996; Thompson, 1967).²⁸ Technology, therefore, is another story-maker of

²⁷ Technological influences, therefore, are not uniform. Some political areas or some stages of political processes are more vulnerable to technological change than others, where technology produces modest effects. The rise of technology, moreover, has mixed or contradictory influences on politics. For example, the Internet allows ordinary citizens to gain varied political information and ideas easily. At the same time, however, it provides political elites with a capacity to invade the private lives of individual citizens. Political changes connected with the Internet are outcomes of these multiple, complex, and contradictory changes. Due to these uneven and multiple outcomes of technological influence, studies of technology and politics are sensitive to researchers' different focuses. This is one of the sources of the lack of agreement about the Internet's influence on politics.

²⁸ Mark Poster (1997) criticizes the idea that the Internet provides human actors with new capabilities. He argues: "The Internet is more like a social space than a thing; its effects are more like those of Germany than those of hammers. The effect of Germany upon the people within it is to make them Germans (at least for the most part); the effect of hammers is not to make people hammers, though Heideggerians and some others might disagree, but to force metal spikes into wood" (p. 216). This "effect of Germany," however, can be found not only in the Internet or communication and transportation technologies, but also in other technologies like guns (see Latour, 1993, 1999; Pickering, 2005a).

social transformation. In the words of James Carey (1989), “technology is not only artifact but actor” (p. 8). In sum, while human factors create and shape technological changes, technological factors frame and construct human factors (Carey, 1997; Latour, 1993, 1999; Pickering, 2005a, 2005b). In this view, technology and the human cannot be considered separable factors with a cause-effect relation.

Although technology and the human are heterogeneous elements, they mutually co-construct or adjust to each other. They, as a result, are associated with each other. Their relation, therefore, should be conceptualized as an association or assemblage. From this perspective, which he calls “decentered sociology” or “a posthumanist perspective,” Andrew Pickering (2005a) argues that social transformation connected to technological change is an “assemblage of reciprocally tuned heterogeneous elements” (p. 399). In this notion of the relation between technology and the human, social change connected with technological change is regarded as the result of the rise of a new association between technology and the humans, which cannot be reduced to either human or technological factors (Carey, 2005; Haraway, 1991; Knorr Cetina, 1997; Latour, 1993, 1999; Pickering, 2005a, 2005b).²⁹

A new human-technology association is shaped by the process of the interactions between these two factors, rather than by the effects of one of them on the other. This interaction process is characterized by a “linked series of actions, reactions, or retroactions”—in Raymond Boudon’s phrase (1986, p. 19)—of human actors with regard to technological changes. It is necessary, therefore, to examine how human actors incorporate technology into their lives. At the same time, it is also crucial to explore how changing technology frames and shapes those linked series of actions, reactions, or retroactions of human actors. In short, the associated notion of the relation between the human and technology requires researchers studying social change connected with technology to focus on how technology is interwoven with the human and to explore a series of micro changes as well as macro changes in this process.

The research question that the associated notion of the relation between the human and technology brings to the fore can be understood more clearly, when one considers formulations of existing research questions in media studies. In his very short but influential article, Elihu Katz (1959) presented two main formulations of research questions in this field. The first is

²⁹ Also see Biggs (2005), Thompson (1995), and Williams (1992/1974). Even though these scholars do not state the associated perspective of the relation between technology and the human, they describe social changes as the rise of the new association between the technological and human factors.

“What do the media do to people?” This formulation has been taken up by researchers of media message and technology effects (see Bryant & Zillman, 2002; Meyrowitz, 1995). The second formulation is “What do people do with the media?” Uses-and-gratifications research has been developed directly from this formulation. Research questions in media reception studies, according to Katz (2005), can also be understood as this second formulation. In contrast with these two formulations, the associated notion of the relationship between technology and the human presents the third formulation: “How are people associated with the media?”

The associated notion of the relation between the human and technology is more important in studying the Internet-politics association, because this association is currently in an early stage of its development. A current state of the Internet-politics assemblage should not be regarded as its endpoint. As the use of the Internet has expanded and its technological characteristics have changed, previous observations about and knowledge of the Internet-politics association have been quickly outmoded. Researchers, therefore, cannot conclude what the association would turn out to be, based on observations at a particular time-point in the broad process of the interconnection between the Internet and politics. Even though a distinct political transformation is not observed at a particular point in time, this does not necessarily mean that the Internet produces no political transformation. A current state should be considered a moment in the long-term process of constructing the Internet-politics assemblage.

In my view, current debates on the Internet-politics association are like the story of the three blind men who argue about what an elephant looks like, based on their touching of a small part of the elephant. Based on our current partial observations, it is impossible to reach final conclusions or agreement about the Internet-politics association. Nevertheless, if one has to explore the association, one needs to piece together a variety of political changes connected with the Internet through a process of continued observation and careful interpretation, rather than to provide general arguments about the cause and direction of political change connected with the Internet. In doing this, one should focus on micro and fledgling changes in the political lives of political actors, as well as macro and distinct political changes connected with the Internet. This attention to micro and fledgling political changes would make studies on the Internet-politics association open to unexpected and newly emergent political changes connected with the Internet.

Political changes connected with the Internet should not be restricted to changes in what is considered, based on existing theoretical frameworks of politics, to be the essential elements of

modern politics. Observations of political changes are influenced by observers' conceptual and theoretical frameworks of politics, which are built on our political experiences before the rise of the Internet. This restricted view of political change may make it difficult to perceive new types of political changes that cannot be captured by an existing conceptual and theoretical framework of political phenomena. In order to capture unexpected and newly emergent political changes, existing conceptual and theoretical frameworks of politics should be critically examined and revised, based on what takes place in the process of the interconnection between the Internet and politics.

In investigating the action, culture, and subjectivity of the online-talk participants from the associated perspective of the relation between humans and technology, it is useful to make sense of online sites through two space-related concepts: "online space" and "online place." The conceptual distinction between "space" and "place" has been made in recent social studies of place (see Giddens, 1990; Gieryn, 2000). In these studies, "place" refers to space combined with particular people, material forms, and meanings, while "space" is "abstract geometries detached from material form and cultural interpretation" (Gieryn, 2000, p. 465). If this conceptual framework can be applied to online sites, "online place" can be defined as online space filled up by people, practices, relationships, and meanings; whereas "online space" can refer to the technological location detached from digitalized cultural contents. An "online space" established and designed for political talk, therefore, becomes an "online place" for political talk when the space is combined with particular online-talk participants' practices and meanings.

In this conceptual framework, the communicative action, culture, and subjectivity of online-talk participants are shaped in the process of the interactions between technological features of online space and online-talk participants. Their action, culture, and subjectivity can be reduced neither to their previous political desires, attitudes, and values, nor to the intentions or goals of people who establish online space designed for online political talk, nor to the technological features of online space. In studying the action, culture, and subjectivity of online-talk participants in South Korea, I explore how the South Korean online-talk participants have been interconnected with technological features of online space.³⁰

³⁰ It is necessary to emphasize that my research is not designed to provide general answers to such questions as whether political change connected with the Internet transform modern politics, what form of politics such political change will turn out to be, or whether such changes come from the Internet or the social. On the contrary, the perspective of my research assumes that it is impossible to present general answers to such question. In fact, recent

Research method and sites

In this section, I discuss my research method and introduce my research sites. First, I explain how I selected the Internet sites—the web forums—on which I conducted my research. Second, I report how I collected data for my research. In describing how to select my research sites and how to gather my data, I also provide basic information about the web forums and the groups of online talk participants on which my research focused. Lastly, I portray the designs of the web forums.

Research Internet sites: How to select research sites

Online-talk participants and the quality of their online political talk differ among Internet sites.³¹ What sites I focus on may influence the conclusion of my study. It is important, therefore, to avoid the problem of possible selection bias in my study. Comparative political scientist David Collier (1995) has defined *selection bias* as a bias “occurring when the nonrandom selection of cases results in inferences, based on the resulting sample, that are not statistically representative of the population” (p. 462). Selection bias is a common problem raised for any social researchers who intend to make general inferences from particular cases or data sets (see Collier, 1995; Collier & Mahoney, 1996; King, Keohane, & Verba, 1994; Lusick, 1996). There is no perfect solution to selection bias, particularly in qualitative research. In this view, social methodologists studying selection bias have recommended that qualitative researchers try to reduce the bias through more deliberate selection of cases (Lustick, 1996; King et al., 1994).

political changes in South Korea are connected not only with the technological characteristics of the Internet but also with practice of political actors who are situated in particular social, political, and cultural conditions of South Korea. The experience in the country, therefore, cannot be generalized to other countries. I believe, nevertheless, that my research can contribute to studies of the Internet and politics in other countries. Geertz (1973) argued that the objective of interpretive anthropology is “to make available to us answers that others, guarding other sheep in other valleys, have given, and thus to include them in the consultable record of what man has said” (p. 30). Likewise, my research makes South Korean experiences available to researchers of the Internet and politics, and thus includes these experiences in the consultable records of how politics is changed with the rise of the Internet.

³¹ A case study of an Internet site for political talk cannot provide general information about the state of online political talk, unless one believes that every Internet site for online political talk can bring about similar forms of political talk. Wilhelm (2000) points out correctly the limitation of these case studies in providing general evaluation of online political talk. In particular, he criticizes studies that present positive evaluation of online political talk, based on the analysis of a particular case like PeaceNet. I however think that the problem of the case studies can be more severe in the studies that provide negative evaluation of the state of online talk than in the studies that try to show the democratic potential of online talk. The latter studies intend to show the democratic potential of the Internet. This argument, therefore, can be supported by the existence of a site where people engage in democratic online talk. The former studies, however, cannot prove their argument by showing a site where online political talk does not conform to requirements for democratic talk, unless one believes that every Internet site for online political talk should bring about democratic talk.

With the selection bias issue in mind, I selected, as my main research sites, four web forums: *Seoprise* (www.seoprise.com), *Knowhow21* (www.knowhow21.co.kr)—which was renamed *MoveOn21* (www.moveon21.com) in November, 2006—*Zzizil.net* (www.zzizil.net),³² and *Polizen* (www.polizen.com). *Seoprise* was established on October 14, 2002, by seven people who had actively posted their political thoughts online. One of the seven people was a journalist—whose name is Seo Young Seok—who then worked for a daily newspaper, the *Kookmin Ilbo*; and the other six were supporters of the then-ruling party presidential candidate, Roh Moo-Hyun, in the 2002 presidential election.³³ Seo became a principal owner of the forum in 2003.³⁴ *Seoprise* is still known as a forum of faithful supporters of former president Roh.

I chose *Seoprise* as my research site because it is a well-known web forum for political talk in South Korea. I think the analysis of online-talk participants and their political talk on smaller-scale, specialized, and localized Internet sites³⁵ may produce a more severe selection bias than that on well-known sites. *Seoprise* has been reported quite a few times by South Korean news media. Scores of politicians have sometimes posted their own messages on the forum. These politicians include former government ministers and members of the National Assembly. Even though the forum is not the biggest one in the country, it is a major political forum. According to *Rankey.com*,³⁶ *Seoprise* is the most popular South Korean site in the division of political webzine/forum. While I conducted my research, the forum ranked within the top 200 in the list of the most popular websites in South Korea that *Rankey.com* provide based on the number of visitors. It is not easy to specify the number of visitors to *Seoprise*, because the number of visitors to the forum has fluctuated over time. According to administrators of the forum, when South Korea was struck by an explosive public issue, the average number of visitors per day was about 100,000 to 150,000.³⁷ When there were not any big public issues, the

³² The web address of *Zzizil.net* was changed to www.albab.kr on August 3, 2008.

³³ The presidential election took place on December 19, 2002.

³⁴ My informants said that in summer 2006, Seo sold *Seoprise* to one of the administrators of the forum.

³⁵ For instance, websites of British refugee support groups (Siapera, 2004), two Dutch political party discussion lists (Hagemann, 2002), or a web forum about a new vision for the development of the city of Hamburg in Germany (Albrecht, 2006) among others.

³⁶ *Rankey.com* is a company that provides Internet customer analysis in South Korea.

³⁷ This number refers to the number of computer IPs that visit *Seoprise* per day. If an Internet user visits the site more than one time for a day through the same computer IP, the Internet user is counted only one time. The measure of website visitors by computer IP, however, can count the same visitor more than one time, if the Internet user visits the same web forum through different computer IPs. Many active online-talk participants tend to visit their forums from both work and home. The number of visitors to *Seoprise*, therefore, is likely to be less than the number of computer IPs.

average number of visitors fell within 40,000 and 80,000. The number of messages posted on the forum also varies over time. The average number of messages per day ranges from 500 to 1,500. (It is, however, necessary to mention that not all of the visitors are active participants on the forum. Many visitors are lurkers. All of the messages, moreover, posted on the forum do not convey meaningful information and ideas. Quite a few are junk messages or simple expressions of emotions such as anger or delight.) The number of hits on popular posts on *Seoprise* is more than 10,000. In the case of the most popular message, the number of hits sometimes reaches more than 20,000. The number of hits, however, does not indicate the number of people who click on a posting, because quite a few readers click the same message more than one time in order to read comments on the message.

Another reason for selecting *Seoprise* is that it is designed mainly for political communication among ordinary citizens. There are many Internet sites established primarily for non-political talk among ordinary citizens or for interaction between elite communicators—such as professional politicians or occupational public communicators—and ordinary citizens. Online political talk among citizens often takes place on these sites. When South Korea was struck by an explosive public issue, many of these sites were turned into online places for public talk about the public issue among citizens. Ordinary citizens' online talk about contemporary affairs and public issues, however, is more easily observed in web forums designed for such talk than on other Internet sites.

Third, even though *Seoprise* is a major web forum, it is not too big for my research. When I observed bigger web forums, which are operated by major web portals in South Korea, I had difficulty following talk and discussion on the forums because too many messages and responses were posted. That made me focus on messages that are selected by editors to be posted on the main pages of the forums. Unlike these bigger forums, *Seoprise* is of manageable-enough size so that I could follow trends and issues of talk and discussion on the forum. That made it possible for me to observe how online talk and discussion evolve on the forum.

On *Seoprise*, some of the forum participants have formed close and strong networks with one another, which have sometimes developed into off-line networks. Multiple groups of these networks have existed on the forum. I participated in face-to-face gatherings of six different groups of the forum participants. In particular, I became a member of two of the six groups. I visited the online places of the two groups everyday and participated in their talk.

One of the two groups consists of about twenty people who have been committed to *Seoprise*.³⁸ They named their group *Miraerul Hyanghan Junbi* 미래를 향한 준비—I will call the group *Mirae*—which means “the preparation for the future” in Korean. In addition to the main forum designed for political talk, *Seoprise* has multiple sub-forums within its site. Most members of *Mirae* came to know each other on one of those sub-forums, which is designed for online talk about sports. Many members of this group, however, are closer to lurkers or comment posters than message posters. These people have seldom posted their own messages on the main forum of *Seoprise*, which is designed for political talk. Even on the sub-forum for online talk about sports, they only have posted comments on messages posted by other people. After the members of *Mirae* had several off-line meetings, they also established their own online space on the free web site that a web portal provides.

The other group is made up of thirty-seven people who were critical of Dr. Hwang Woo Suk and his supporters on his scientific misconduct scandal (see, for the Dr. Hwang scandal, Chapter 4). While they discussed the Dr. Hwang issue and argued with Hwang’s supporters on *Seoprise*, they formed their own online networks because they shared the same view on the issue. The members of this group named their group *Hwang-To-Bang Yangsim Yeondae* 황토방 양심연대, which means “*Hwang-To-Bang* conscience solidarity” in Korean. (*Hwang-To-Bang* is the acronym of *Hwang Woo Suk Toron Bang* 황우석 토론 방—meaning “the space for discussion about Hwang Woo Suk” in Korean—which is the name of a sub-forum of *Seoprise* established, in April, 2006, for online talk about the Dr. Hwang scandal.) Instead of this full name, the group is often called its acronym: *Hwang-Yang-Yeon*. They created their place for online talk on Google Groups, and later established a new web forum, *Zzizil.net*.

Seoprise participants have diverged several times, when a group of active participants left the forum and created a new one. These splits occurred when active members of the forum were sharply divided into two opposing groups about a certain public issue or an operating principle, and one of the two groups could not accept the opinions of the majority and the administrators of the forum.

I explored two web forums that former *Seoprise*-participants established: *Knowhow21/MoveOn21* and *Zzizil.net*. The former was founded by a group of the then most

³⁸ It is difficult to specify the number of the members of this group, because the number changed over time.

active members of *Seoprise* on September 9, 2004. Even though these people had different reasons for leaving the forum, they shared the same complaint that the owner of *Seoprise*, Seo Young Seok, was doing the forum harm through personal conflicts of interest. *Zzizil.net* was established on May 15, 2007. The members of this forum felt discontented about *Seoprise*'s operators or operating principles. They believed that the operators of *Seoprise* favored supporters of Dr. Hwang.

Each of the two forums, however, has not been completely separated from *Seoprise*. Even though *Knowhow21/Moveon21* and *Zzizil.net* share few online-talk participants, *Seoprise* and each of the two forums share quite a few participants. The participants in one of the forums often talk about what is discussed on the other forum. Messages posted on one of the forums are often copied to the other. Some people sometimes post the same message on the two forums at the same time. In short, the forums form a broad political discourse sphere.

Knowhow21/MoveOn21 and *Zzizil.net* are much smaller than *Seoprise*. The numbers of visitors to these two forums have changed over time. According to the central members of *Knowhow21*, the number of its daily visitors was more than 10,000 in 2005, when the forum was popular. It however fell down to about 1,000 before it was renamed to *MoveOn21* on November 2006.³⁹ Since the members of *Hwan-Yang-Yeon* moved to *Zzizil.net*, which any Internet-user can access, out of Google Groups, which non-members are not allowed to access, scores of new members have joined the group. *Zzizil.net*, nevertheless, is still more like an online community site than a political web forum. The number of visitors to the site is smaller than the other two forums. The average number of daily visitors to *Zzizil.net* falls between 130 and 300.

As I mentioned before, the majority of the members of *Seoprise* are supporters of former President Roh Moo-hyun. The central group of participants in *Knowhow21/MoveOn21* also consists of people who have favored Roh. It is, however, necessary to note that not all participants in the two forums are supporters of the former president. Visitors to *Zzizil.net* are distributed across the political spectrum more equally than the other two forums. Some participants in *Zzizil.net* are members of a progressive party and critics of Roh; another group of participants are former or current supporters of Roh; still another group of participants lean toward a conservative party. In this forum, however, the number of supporters of the

³⁹ As in the case of *Seoprise*, these numbers of visitors to the forum are larger than those of real visitors, because the same visitors accessing the site in more than two different places can be counted more than once.

conservative party is still much smaller than that of anti-conservative people. Hence, my study may have had a selection bias, if I had only examined *Seoprise*, *Knowhow21/MoveOn21*, and *Zzizil.net*.

In order to avoid this possible bias, I chose, as another research site, *Polizen* (www.polizen.com), most visitors to which are conservative critics of Roh and favor the conservative party. The central members of *Polizen* were active participants in an Internet site for political discussion—named *Joins Digital Kookhae*, which means “Joins Digital National Assembly” in Korean—that one of the biggest South Korean newspapers, *JoongAng Ilbo*, established and operated. In 2004, political discussion on the forum centered on debate between supporters of then president Roh Moo-hyun and his conservative critics. The central figures of the conservative critics left *Joins Digital Kookhae* and established *Polizen* in November 2005, because they thought that the operators of the forum favored supporters of Roh. The forum was divided in March 2007, when a main figure of the forum, Sidaeyugam, had a conflict with the other central members over who should take the leadership of the forum, and established his own forum, *Nparam* (www.nparam.com).

Many online-talk participants in my study visit multiple Internet sites designed for political talk. Some of them post their own messages on multiple sites. I therefore also needed to visit such sites occasionally in order to observe the practice of the online-talk participants on whom I focus in my study. In addition to the four web forums, *Seoprise*, *Knowhow21/MoveOn21*, *Zzizil.net*, and *Polizen*, from time to time I visited additional Internet sites designed for political talk. These sites comprise news media sites, political web forums, the bulletin boards of the web sites for a civil society group and a commercial company, a blog portal, and blogs. More specifically, they include *Agora* (<http://agora.media.daum.net/>), *Hantoma* (<http://hantoma.hani.co.kr/>), *Mediamob* (<http://www.mediamob.co.kr/>), *Sisa/Jeongchi bang of Dvdprime* (<http://dvdprime.paran.com/bbs/list.asp?major=ME&minor=E1&masterid=172>), *Ohmynews* (<http://www.ohmynews.com>), *Sorimadang of Bric* (<http://bric.postech.ac.kr/myboard/list.php?Board=sori>), *Nosamo* (<http://www.nosamo.com/>), *Nparam* (<http://www.nparam.com/main.html>), *Innermost* (<http://www.innermost.com/>), *Ddanzi Ilbo* (<http://www.ddanzi.com/>), *Skeptical left* (<http://www.skepticalleft.com>), and scores of blogs.

My observation of additional Internet sites also helped me avoid the problem of selection bias in my study. If I had explored only online-talk participants and their political talk on the four

forums on which I focus, my study might have been open to another possible selection bias, which may come from the uniqueness of participants in the four forums. Through the observation of additional Internet sites, I had chances to examine the validity of my arguments, which are based on the observation of and experience in the four forums under my study. More specifically, I could check whether my arguments come from the selection bias of my research.

Data gathering: How to gather data

The amount and quality of online political talk among ordinary citizens vary significantly according to not only Internet sites but also period and discussion issue. Therefore, if one studies the culture of online-talk participants through a short-term analysis of certain Internet sites, the study may lead to a misleading conclusion. The sensitivity of political talk to a period and an issue can be another source of possible selection bias in my research. In order to avoid this possible bias, I conducted a long-term ethnographic study of online political talk and online-talk participants from April 2005 to January 2008.

While conducting my research, I visited South Korea four times: June to August 2005, December 2005 to January 2006, May 2006 to February 2007, May to November 2007. I gathered data through four methods: online participatory observation, off-line participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and a review of the accounts by online-talk participants of their experiences.

On a daily basis, I visited the four web forums on which my research focuses: *Seoprise*, *Knowhow21/Moveon21*, *Zzizil.net*, and *Polizen*. This daily visit was important for my research, because talk and discussion on the forums are updated daily, and some messages are often modified and deleted.

Researchers using participant observation have argued that the main benefit of participant observation as an empirical research method lies not in participation but in interactions between researchers and research objects, because they believe that such interaction can reveal the structure and context of meaning in which actors are embedded (Emerson, Fretz, & Show, 1995). From this perspective, I tried not only to observe the practice of online-talk participants but also to interact with them. My participation was limited to posting comments on other participants' messages on *Seoprise*, *Knowhow21/MoveOn21*, and *Polizen*. I however participated more actively in political talk on *Zzizil.net*. I posted my own messages and engaged in discussion and

debate on the site. Most messages and replies that I posted on the four forums contained my critical comments on messages posted by other forum participants. These critical comments either pointed out logical fallacies of the messages or provided opposing arguments to the messages. On *Zzizil.net*, I participated in sociable talk as well as political talk. That is, I talked to the *Zzizil.net* participants about human-interest or leisure-related issues, such as movies, literature, and travel.

Quite a few Internet researchers have argued that on-line interaction and community are intertwined with off-line interaction (see Hine, 2000; Kendall, 1999; Sterne, 1999). They therefore have emphasized that Internet research should focus on the interconnection between the virtual world and the non-virtual world. From this perspective, I observed off-line political activities organized by operators or participants of the web forums in my study, and I participated in face-to-face gatherings of the forum participants. I took part in off-line meetings of participants not only in the four web forums on which my research focuses, but also in other forums such as *Hantoma*, *Dvdprime*, *Innermost*, *Sorimadang of Bric*, and *Nparam*. In these face-to-face gatherings, I observed conversations of participants and had personal interactions with about 250 online-talk participants.

When I conducted my fieldwork in South Korea, *Seoprise*, *MoveOn21*, and *Polizen* had their own offices where the administrators of the web forums manage the Internet sites and edit messages posted on the forums. I visited these offices. In particular, I went to the office of *MoveOn21* regularly, talking to the administrators and observing their work.

I also conducted in-depth interviews with online-talk participants.⁴⁰ I interviewed seventy-three forum participants. Each interview lasted from 1 hour and 30 minutes to 6 hours. I interviewed eleven people more than one time. I have contacted my interviewees through participation in face-to-face gatherings, on-line interactions with online-talk participants, and e-mail.

I divided my interviewees into four categories. The first consists of people who organize and manage the forums and edit messages posted on the web forums. The second category includes people who post their thoughts and arguments about public issues on the forums. I also interviewed people who are more like readers than message posters. Many of these reader-like

⁴⁰ An In-depth interview is a way of finding out what others feel and think about their worlds and understanding experiences and events in which a researcher did not participate (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

participants are lurkers, who are the third category of my interviewees. Some of them, however, can be considered members of the forums. Even though these reader-like members of the forums seldom post their thoughts and arguments on public issues, they have constant nicknames on the forums, often post short comments—expressing their agreement—on messages, and participate in off-line social gatherings. The fourth category is made up of these reader-like members of the forums.

Lurkers are the hardest category to contact. I recruited them in three ways. When I participated in off-line social gatherings of the forum participants in my study, I met quite a few people who regularly participate in off-line social gatherings but post few messages or comments online. In those social gatherings, I also met several newcomers to the social gatherings who had posted few messages or comments on the forums. Although many members of the forums in my study are online-talk participants in their forums, they are, at the same time, lurkers in other forums. In addition to lurker-turned participants in face-to-face gatherings, therefore, I obtained information about the ideas and feelings of lurkers through the forum participants. I also recruited some lurkers through my personal networks. Some of my personal contacts happen to be lurkers on *Seoprise* or to know some lurkers on the forum. In fact, this is not surprising if one considers that *Seoprise* is a well-known political forum to South Korean Internet users.

In addition to online and off-line participatory observations and in-depth interviews, I examined stories about online-talk experiences and interpretations about those experiences that the online talk participants posted online. These account narratives provide information not only about the online-talk participants' experiences and feelings but also about their expectations, beliefs, and values. These worldviews and ethos presented in those narratives, however, may not be the ones that the online-talk participants actually have and seek. The online-talk participants may express the expectations, beliefs, and values that they believe their readers prefer, because they want, through their account narratives, to manage their image and to present a good impression to others. Yet, even though this is true, the account narratives at least can reveal the worldviews and ethos that the online-talk participants favor. Human actors' accounts, furthermore, have been regarded not only as a way to present themselves to others but also as a means to making their practices and everyday affairs understandable to themselves and others (Maines, 1993; Orbuch, 1997). In this view, account narratives impose order and meaning on disparate events and chaotic experience by integrating and explaining those events and

experience. Therefore, although the online-talk participants' narratives are not purely representational, their narratives display the political worldviews and normative ideals that the online-talk participants share (Maines, 1993; Orbuch, 1997).⁴¹ From this perspective, I collected and reviewed the account narratives that the online-talk participants posted on their web forums and blogs.

The designs of the four web forums studied

The four web forums in my study have very similar designs and ways of interaction among the forum participants. The front pages of the forums, called *daemun* 대문 meaning a “main gate” in Korean, show the list of the messages that moderators choose among messages posted on the forums. Each forum does not have its own clear criteria of how to choose a message for its *daemun*. Messages displayed in the *daemons*, however, are usually considered good ones that represent the identity of each forum and that the moderators want forum visitors to read. Each of the four forums has more than one sub-forum, which are divided according to subjects of conversation. The sub-forum for discussing current public issues, however, is considered a central one. When one clicks the name of a sub-forum on a front page, one can go to a list page of the sub-forum, on which the titles of messages are displayed in chronological order. If one clicks a title, one can move to a message page and to read its messages.

The four forums in my study allow anyone to post their messages without registration. They therefore offer full anonymity. Most active participants, however, are identified because they use unique and constant nicknames. Quite a few members use their real names as their nicknames. Registered members can be recognized because their nicknames are displayed in boldface. The forums provide their registered members with some privileges and online services. These privileges comprise the ability to delete a reply to one's own message on *Seoprise* and *MoveOn21* and the privilege to give a larger range of scores than non-registered participants can give on *Seoprise* when rating a message. Online services provided for registered members include the function to send personal messages to each other on the four forums and the function to include an avatar and signature block in one's own message on *Zzizil.net*,

⁴¹ In his novel *Mother Night* (2006/1961), American novelist Kurt Vonnegut said, “We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful about what we pretend to be” (p. v).

Readers can response to messages in three ways. First, they can express their evaluation of each message by giving a grade or recommendation score. The ways of rating and the possible ranges vary according to each forum.⁴² The score that each reader gives to messages is automatically summed. Readers can see the sum of the recommendation scores of each message before they click it. *Seoprise* has a system of classifying messages, based on their scores. The forum provides sub-sites that show the list of messages receiving a similar level of recommendation scores. Therefore, when forum visitors click on the sub-sites, they can easily identify messages that receive higher than a certain score.

The second way of responding to messages is to post opinions or feeling on messages in the form of a reply to the message or the form of a comment on the message. These forms of reactions are called “*reple*,” “*daet-gul*,” or “*deot-gul*” in Korean. They include simple expressions of agreement or disagreement, information and data about the issues proposed in messages, or questions about and critiques of an argument presented in a message. In the form of reply, the title of a reply is posted in a list of messages’ titles and located, in the list, below the title of the message to which the reply responds. When one clicks on the title, one can read the reply, but cannot read the message to which the reply responds. In the form of a comment, readers’ responses are posted in a message page. That is, a message page consists of two parts: the message written by message posters and the audience members’ comments on the message. Comments are located in a space below a message in a message page. So, when one clicks on the title of a message, one can read the message and the comments on it at the same time. The comment form is much more often and widely used by forum participants than the reply form. Comments on messages are displayed in chronological order on *Seoprise* and *Polizen*, and as threaded discussions on *Moveon21* and *Zzizil.net*.

Lastly, readers sometimes post their responses to messages as a new message, instead of as a reply or a comment. Readers tend to post their responses to messages as a new message

⁴² In *Seoprise*, at first, the grade that each reader could give to a message ranged from zero to plus five. The lower range of the grade expanded from zero to minus five in April 2004. The forum, later, gave its registered members the privilege to give a grade from minus seven to plus seven. This privilege was further expanded by allowing registered members to give as much as minus forty-seven or plus forty-seven in accordance to the number of their postings and grading messages from April 3, 2007. The range of grading for registered members, however, was reduced to plus ten to minus ten on August 31, 2007 due to forum visitors’ complaints. In *Knowhow21*, the grade is divided into two parts of “support” and “objection.” When readers click one of them, for example “support,” they can give one to five points to each message. After the forum was renamed *MoveOn21*, it did away with the grade of “objection.”

when their responses are long pieces of writing or when readers think that the writers and other readers of the original messages may not read their response because they had responded to the messages too late.

The posters of messages can respond to readers' responses to their messages in two ways. First, they present their responses to readers' responses in the form of replies, which are posted below either readers' replies to the original messages or readers' new messages posted as responses to the original messages. The second form of responses by message posters is to post new messages containing their responses to readers' comments. These responses of the posters lead the readers—who posted their responses to the messages—to post new responses to the posters' responses. These interactions between message posters and comment posters sometimes result in more than day-long dialogues and debates.

Responses to readers' comments on messages can come from a third party as well as from the poster of the messages. The third party answers questions presented by other comment posters, criticizes other readers' comments on a message, or provides a third opinion in response to both an initial message and readers' responses to the message. Therefore, messages sometimes bring about multiple interactions among more than two interlocutors.

Dissertation structure

In studying the subjectivity of the *simin* public and the transformation of South Korean citizens into members of the new public, my research is in dialogue with three scholars' ideas about the public. The three scholars are John Dewey (1954/1927), Hannah Arendt (1958, 1977/1961, 1990/1963), and Jürgen Habermas (1989/1962, 1992). Chapter 2 examines these scholars' models of the public. In this chapter, I identify different forms of the subjectivity of the public in the three models. I also explore the three scholars' ideas about how these forms of the subjectivity of the public emerged or can emerge. In exploring this issue, I emphasize the importance of the cultural and communicative factors in the three models.

In chapter 3, I introduce the South Korean context in which online political talk has emerged. In particular, I focus on two factors that not only have framed political communication in the country, but also have played significant roles in shaping online political talk and its culture. The first factor is the sense of mainstream news media that is shared by many South Korean citizens. In this sense, the news media are regarded as powerful political forces and also

as purveyors of political bias. I provide a basic understanding of this sense and its importance. The second factor is the structural transformation of political communication that the Internet has brought about. Specifically, I discuss two changes in political communication: the growth of media criticism and the rise of a new form of audience, which I call *networked immediate audience*.

Chapters 4–6 are dedicated to examining the active public communicators—which I call *citizen polemicists*—who play central parts in online political talk. I conceptually distinguish the social role and the social position of the citizen polemicist. Social role refers to patterned and characteristic actions framed by expectations. Social position designates a socially recognized category of actors. In chapter 4, I identify the social role of the citizen polemicist, which I call citizen polemicism. I illustrate the key actions of citizen polemicists, characterize the actions, and describe the actions' contribution to public communication. Chapter 5 is concerned with the social position of the citizen polemicist. The chapter deals with an issue of why some people are committed to citizen polemicism. Chapter 6 examines the source of the legitimacy of citizen polemicists' voices as a public voice. In this chapter, I investigate how the voice of the citizen polemicist is believed to be desirable, appropriate, and proper for society.

While chapters 4–6 focus on citizen polemicists as one part of online political talk, chapter 7 draws attention to online political talk as a whole. In this chapter, therefore, I describe how citizen polemicists interact with ordinary participants in online political talk. In particular, this chapter is dedicated to exploring a major culture that characterizes online political talk in South Korea: the culture of thinking together in public. I illustrate three components of this culture: interaction-oriented communication, critical communicative interaction, and the production of collective political discourse.

In my concluding chapter (chapter 8), I summarize my findings and arguments. I depict what my study reveals with regard to the three goals of my research: demonstrating the rise of the subjectivity of the *simin* public; describing how the Internet contributes to the emergence of the new public; and explaining how individual citizens have been transformed into members of the new public. I summarize the action and culture of online-talk participants that demonstrate the rise of the subjectivity of the *simin* public in South Korea. In doing so, I illustrate important factors and processes that have contributed to give rise to the new public. In particular, I specify how the Internet has influenced the emergence of the *simin* public. Lastly, I clarify central

factors that contribute to the transformation of individuals into members of the *simin* public. I account for these findings' contribution to understanding how individuals can be turned into members of the public.

Figures and Tables



[Figure 1-1] The beef demonstrators were approaching, on May 31, 2008, the barricades that police had built with riot police buses (photographed by Kim Jeong Hyo).

Chapter 2

Three Models of the Public: John Dewey, Hannah Arendt, and Jürgen Habermas

A number of communication and political scholars have argued for the importance of political discussion and debate among citizens. For most scholars of participatory democracy, political discussion and debate are central to democratic citizenship.⁴³ Many critics of democracy have cast doubt on the idea that ordinary citizens can make reasonable and sound political judgments (see Caplan, 2007; Gasset, 1964/1930; Lippmann, 1950/1922, 2002/1925; Plato, 2000; Schumpeter, 1976/1942; Sartori, 1987).⁴⁴ These critics have pointed out that average citizens lack information about political issues and the capability to make political judgments.⁴⁵ In challenging this criticism against the political participation of citizens, quite a few scholars of democracy have contended that ordinary citizens can be legitimate judges of public issues when they think together with fellow citizens (see Arendt, 1977/1961, 1982; Barber, 1984; Dewey, 1954/1927; Habermas, 1989/1962; Kant, 1991/1784; Lasch, 1990; Mills, 1956). In recent years, deliberative democracy theorists have also emphasized rational discussion and debate—in their term, deliberation—as the source of the legitimacy of political decisions (Benhabib, 1996; Bohman, 1996; Cohen, 1997; Fishkin, 1991; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996, 2004; Habermas, 1996/1992, 1998/1996). In addition to the mechanism of making reasonable judgments and the source of political legitimacy, various values and roles of political discussion and debate among citizens have been presented in communication and political studies.⁴⁶ For example, British political theorist John Keane (1984) has argued that political discussion and debate bring

⁴³ The importance of public discussion in democracy was forcefully stated in a well-known passage from John Dewey's *The Public and Its Problem* (1954/1927): "Majority rule, just as majority rule, is as foolish as its critics charge it with being. But it never is *merely* majority rule. As a practical politician, Samuel J. Tilden, said a long time ago: 'The means by which a majority comes to be a majority is the more important thing': antecedent debates, modification of views to meet the opinions of minorities, the relative satisfaction given the latter by the fact that it has had a chance and that next time it may be successful in becoming a majority.... The essential need, in other words, is the improvement of the methods and conditions of debate, discussion and persuasion" (pp. 207-208). Hannah Arendt (1977/1968) also asserted that "a state ... in which there is no communication between the citizens and where each man thinks only his own thoughts is by definition a tyranny" (p. 164).

⁴⁴ For these critics, democracy is basically characterized by the rule by the many or majority rule. For reviews of critical theories of participatory democracy, see Bachrach, 1967; Dahl, 1989; Held, 1996.

⁴⁵ These critics of democracy have pointed out that in making political decisions, ordinary citizens are overwhelmed by their personal desires and interests or influenced by their irrational and short-sighted views.

⁴⁶ For various possible benefits of public discussion and debate among citizens, see Delli Carpini, Cook, & Jacobs (2004), Fearon (1998), Gambetta (1998), and Gutmann & Thompson (1996).

flexibility and reflectivity to politics. Hannah Arendt (1958, 1990/1963) maintained, from her own perspective of human activity and the political, that political debate—action and speech in her terms—is the highest form of human activity as well as the essence of political life.⁴⁷ For these scholars, discussion and debate are the essential activities required for citizens who participate in a political process.

From this perspective, good politics calls for groups of citizens who engage in political discussion and debate: more specifically, associations or networks of citizens who try to form their own judgments on public matters and to reach shared understanding and judgments with fellow citizens through discussion and debate. Such discussion and debate should be open to strangers beyond intimate networks like family members or friends (see Carey, 1995; Gouldner, 1976; Habermas, 1989/1962; Sennett, 1974; Sunstein, 2007). That is, the discussion and debate should take place in public. Participants in this form of political communication are required to put aside their social identities and material interests, to identify themselves with citizens as a whole, to view their own judgments impartially from the viewpoints of others, and to form independent and equal relationships with their fellow citizens (see Arendt, 1958, 1990/1963, 1977/1968, 1982; Chartier, 1991/1990; Dewey, 1954/1927; Habermas, 1989/1962, 1992; Kant, 1991/1784). The company of this type of political actors has been called the public (see Blumer, 1946; Carey, 1995; Dewey, 1954/1927; Gouldner, 1976; Habermas, 1989/1962; Mills, 1956; Park, 1972/1904).

The public requires a communication space that is visible and open to anybody (see Carey, 1997/1991). Removal of barriers to development of this communication space, therefore, is necessary for the rise of the public.⁴⁸ But it is not a sufficient condition. In a short but seminal essay, Immanuel Kant (1991/1784) argued:

A revolution may well put an end to autocratic despotism and to rapacious or power-seeking oppression, but it will never produce a true reform in ways of thinking. Instead, new prejudices, like the ones they replaced, will serve as a leash to control the great unthinking mass. (p. 55)

⁴⁷ Even though political debate is a central part of action and speech in Arendt's idea, what she meant by the terms is more than political debate (see, for a succinct explanation of Arendt's ideas about these terms, Habermas, 1994/1977).

⁴⁸ These barriers include legal, political, economic, technical, and cultural ones (for a cultural barrier, see Eliasoph, 1998).

As this statement intimates, individuals are not automatically transformed into members of the public, although barriers to the emergence of a public and open communication space—for example, political and legal restrictions against public communication and political participation—are lifted.

In fact, many scholars studying political subjects have agreed that the increase of political equality in modern society has transformed common people into the mass or politically apathetic citizens, rather than the public (see Arendt, 1961; Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954; Dewey, 1954/1927; Gasset, 1964/1930; Habermas, 1989/1962; Mills, 1956; Oakeshott, 1991/1961). Quite a few critics of classical theories of democracy, moreover, have insisted that it is not feasible for ordinary people to become the public, because they are not motivated to make judgment of public issues and to engage in public communication (see Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954; Hibbing & Theiss-Morse, 2002; Lippmann, 2002/1925; Schumpeter, 1942). Rational choice theorists have argued that ordinary citizens' lack of motivation for political participation results from rationality (see Downs, 1957; Olson, 1965).⁴⁹

These skeptical arguments about the rise of the public suggest that people are not born as the members of the public. The rise of the public, thus, requires not only change of external conditions with regard to political participation but also transformation of individuals into the members of the public: more specifically, change in individual citizens' ways of thinking and motivations.⁵⁰ In order to understand how the public can come into existence, from this perspective, it is necessary to explore what the subjectivity of the public is and how such subjectivity is constructed and proliferated.⁵¹

This chapter explores how the three most influential models of the public in contemporary political studies deal with the issues regarding the subjectivity of the public. The three models are presented by John Dewey (1954/1927; 1976/1939), Hannah Arendt (1958,

⁴⁹ For a critical review of rational choice theory, see Green & Shapiro (1994).

⁵⁰ Dewey (1976/1939) emphasized the importance of the construction of democratic subjectivity: "...that democracy is personal way of individual life; that it signifies the possession and continual use of certain attitudes, forming personal character and determining desire and purpose in all the relations of life" (p. 226).

⁵¹ In addition to an issue of how individuals can be transformed into members of the public, there are many other issues concerning the public: for example, why the public is a better political subject; what is a political role of the public; how the public and public opinion gained political or symbolic authority in politics; how and why the public declined; whether the public is a collective entity or multiple and heterogeneous groups; how members of the public can reach agreement and consensus; whether consensus is an essential or feasible practice of the public; what is a central communicative practice of the public; and whether it is possible for individuals to form themselves into the public in modern society.

1977/1961, 1990/1963), and Jürgen Habermas (1989/1962, 1992), respectively.⁵² I do not intend to provide an inclusive comparison of the three models.⁵³ Rather, my goal is restricted to describing different forms of the subjectivity of the public presented in these three models and to identifying main factors that contribute to the construction and rise of those forms of subjectivity.

The public as seekers of the interest of community: John Dewey (1859-1952)

In his critical review of Jürgen Habermas's book *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, political theorist Richard Bernstein (1996) has asserted that engaging in democratic debate requires democratic ethos: more specifically and ideally, "a *willingness* to listen to and evaluate the opinions of one's opponents, *respecting* the views of minorities, advancing arguments *in good faith* to support one's convictions, and having the *courage* to change one's mind when confronted with new evidence or better arguments" (p. 1131, emphases in original).⁵⁴ He has argued that in discussing the problem of the public, John Dewey's main concern was with this ethos. Dewey, he added, "believed that the sense of community needed for the flourishing of a democratic ethos was in danger of disappearing or being distorted" (p. 1131). As Bernstein pointed out, Dewey thought that the commitment to community can bring the public into being. From this perspective, he tried to show what can lead citizens to be committed to community in his book *The Publics and Its Problem*.

Dewey did not see the public merely as a normative model of citizenship derived from democratic ideals or values. The public, he argued, is based on a social condition of humans: they are associated in living. More specifically, in his model, the public stems from "the objective fact that human acts have consequences upon others, that some of these consequences are perceived, and that their perception leads to subsequent effort to control action so as to secure some consequences and avoid others" (Dewey, 1954/1927, p. 12). He pointed out that there are two types of consequences of human acts on other people. One is "those which affect the persons directly engaged in a transaction," and the other—called "public consequences" by Dewey—is "those which affect others beyond those immediately concerned" (p. 12). People influenced by

⁵² Many studies and debates of the public have revolved around the three scholars' models (see Calhoun, 1992; Hannay, 2005; Hill & Montag, 2000; Honneth, 1998; Robins, 1993).

⁵³ For other comparative reviews of the three models, see Behhabib (1992) and Honneth (1998).

⁵⁴ In response to Bernstein's critique, Habermas (1996) has emphasized that he has never denied the importance of democratic ethos: "a liberal political culture" in his terms. He has argued that deliberative politics needs the political culture in which citizens "exercise their political liberties in the service of mutual understanding, i.e., to engage in what Kant called 'the public use of reason'" (p. 1481).

the public consequences of human acts share an interest to care for and regulate those consequences. In Dewey's view, this shared interest—in other words, community—provides the foundation of the public.

According to Dewey (1954/1927), however, this condition of associated life cannot turn people into the public, because “association itself is physical and organic, while communal life is moral, that is emotionally, intellectually, consciously sustained” (p. 151). In this view, he pointed out that “we are born organic beings associated with others, but we are not born members of a community” (p. 154). People, he claimed, can be transformed into the public, “when the consequences of combined action are perceived and become an object of desire and effort” (p. 154). Dewey believed that once people perceive their public interest, they will try to pursue it. Perception of the public interest, thus, would lead people to become interested in public affairs and to participate in politics. For Dewey, in short, the public is defined as people who share, perceive, and seek the common interest.

In addition to the recognition and pursuit of the common interest, Dewey (1976/1939) emphasized that the members of the public should keep faith in democratic values like human equality, the capability of human beings for intelligent judgment and action, and the value of amicable cooperation. He believed that if individuals trust democratic values and seek the common interest, they will engage in communication about political matters with fellow citizens.

Dewey (1954/1927) held that the decline of the public in modern society has been caused by the invisibility of extensive and indirect consequences of human acts. The development of technologies such as railways, the telegraph, newspapers, and mass production has generated constant and intricate interactions far beyond the limits of face-to-face communities, leading mobile and fluctuating associational forms to replace static local communities. These changes have “so enormously expanded, multiplied, intensified and complicated the scope of the indirect consequences, and have formed such immense and consolidated unions in action, on an impersonal rather than a community basis, that the resultant public cannot identify and distinguish itself” (p. 126). This, however, does not mean that “there is no public, no large body of persons having a common interest in the consequences of social transaction” (p. 137). That is, even though people in modern society share the common interest, they do not seek it because they have difficulty perceiving it. This barrier to perceiving the common interest has led to the decline of the public.

In Dewey's view, therefore, the primary task in reviving the public is to discover "the means by which a scattered, mobile, and manifold public may so recognize itself as to define and express its interests" (Dewey, 1954/1927, p. 146). He argued that "only when there exist signs or symbols of activities and of their outcome, can the flux be viewed as from without, be arrested for consideration and esteem, and be regulated" (p. 152). In this view, he emphasized the importance of communication.

Interactions, transactions, occur *de facto* and the results of interdependence follow. But participation in activities and sharing in results are additive concerns. They demand communication as a prerequisite. (p. 152)

Dewey believed that free and systematic communication would lead people to share experiences and to perceive their communal lives and, as a result, produce desire and action for communal life.

Dewey argued that ordinary citizens can be transformed into members of the public when they are situated in particular social and communicative conditions, rather than when they perform their political duties. It is doubtful, however, that the perception of the public interest would lead individuals to be active public interest-seekers. Economist Mancur Olson (1965) has argued that the common interest is not the same as the interests of the members constituting the collective.⁵⁵ According to him, the common interest produces benefits that every member of the group can enjoy or consume irrespective of their contribution to achieving this interest. This condition can create the problem of the free-rider, who tries to gain public benefits without paying for them. Thus, Olson (1965) has claimed:

Even if all of the individuals in a large group are rational and self-interested, and would gain if, as a group, they acted to achieve their common interest or objective, they will still not voluntarily act to achieve that common or group interest. (p. 2)

Olson's argument shows that even though individual members of the public perceive their public interest, they may not become active public interest-seekers. From this perspective, Dewey's model of the public as public interest-seekers is open to the problem of the free-rider.

Dewey did not seem to recognize this problem. But he was well aware of the fact that the perception of the common interest is not a sufficient condition of bringing the public into being. In the last pages of *The Public and Its Problems*, Dewey briefly mentioned the importance of

⁵⁵ For the conflict between individual and common interests, also see Arendt (1977).

local community in reviving the public. Local community, he believed, can breed “vital and thorough attachments” to a political community (1954/1927, p. 212). He added:

A man who has not been seen in the daily relations of life may inspire admiration, emulation, servile subjection, fanatical partisanship, hero worship; but not the love and understanding, save as they radiate from the attachments of a near-by union. Democracy must begin at home, and its home is the neighborly community. (p. 213)

In Dewey’s view, the transformation from individuals into the members of the public requires not only their perception of the common interest but also moral and emotional commitment to the community. This commitment, he believed, can be formed through local community based on face-to-face communication and relationships.⁵⁶ He asserted that “there is no substitute for the vitality and depth of close and direct intercourse and attachment” (p. 213). From this perspective, Dewey claimed that “unless local communal life can be restored, the public cannot adequately resolve its most urgent problem: to find and identify itself” (p. 216).

In emphasizing the importance of local community, Dewey seemed to believe that once individuals develop emotional attachment to their local communities, they can extend it, in their minds, to the affection for a national political community. That is, in Dewey’s model, individuals should be able to imagine a connection between a local community and a national one.

Dewey assumed that individuals as members of an association share the common interest because they live in association. In his term, a community refers to an association that consists of people who recognize and seek this common interest. He called these members of a community *the public*. For Dewey, thus, the public is made up of people who are committed to their community and seek the community interest. In short, the public is a political outcome of communal life, and its members are communal subjects. The expansion of an association by the development of transportation and communication technology, he argued, made it difficult for individuals to recognize the fact that they share the public interest, leading to the decline of the public.

In explaining how individuals can be transformed into members of the public, Dewey emphasized the importance of the cultural and communicative dimensions. Individuals, according to him, can be transformed into members of the public when they recognize their community interest, trust democratic values and fellow citizens’ democratic capability, form

⁵⁶ For critical review of Dewey’s idea of the democratic role of local community, see Kaufmann-Osborn (1984).

emotional attachment to their local communities, and extend, in their minds, this affection for a local community to the affection for a national political community. In Dewey's model, these cultural elements such as recognition, faith, affection, and imagination are integral parts in constructing the public. Central to the recognition of the community interest and the formation of the commitment to a community are the development of free and systematic communication systems and the vitalization of communicative interactions.

The public as seekers of public freedom and happiness: Hannah Arendt (1906-1975)⁵⁷

John Dewey did not believe that the public can come into being automatically wherever people live together. He, however, argued that the public stems from the prepolitical condition of human life: associational life. In contrast to Dewey, Hannah Arendt claimed that there is a radical disjunction between political lives of the members of the public and their prepolitical lives.⁵⁸ She (1977) emphasized that the interests of individual mortals cannot coincide with the interest of the common world, which is much more permanent than the life of any one individual. The common good is inherently different from the interests of individuals, even though the latter are enlightened or long-term interests. The source of this intrinsic conflict between the two types of interests lies in the fact that the interests of individuals are always more urgent for individuals than the common good. From this perspective, Arendt (1977) asserted that "public interest always demands a sacrifice of individual interests which are determined by life's necessities and by the limited time which is given to mortals" (p. 106).

In Arendt's view, members of the public simultaneously belong to two different orders of existence: private individuals and members of the public. While they as private individuals are concerned with the maintenance of life and the safeguarding of its interests, they as members of the public should liberate themselves from the worry of their individual lives for the common good. In short, becoming a member of the public demands courage to overcome "the innate urge

⁵⁷ Arendt used the term "citizens" instead of "the public." In her term, citizen refers to political actors who engage in political discussion with their fellow citizens in the public place—which is what I mean by the public—rather than people who possess right to participate in a political process. In explaining Arendt's view of citizens, therefore, I use the term "the public."

⁵⁸ See Schudson, 1999 for distinction between communities and publics. He argued: "communities are not publics. Publics are where strangers meet to consider and to build a common life under rules by which they are treated as moral equals" (p. 131).

of all living creatures for their own survival” (Arendt, 1958, p. 37).⁵⁹ The public consists of people who enjoy, instead of seeking their private interests, what Arendt called *public* or *political freedom*: “the citizen’s right of access to the public realm, in his share in public power—to be ‘a participator in the government of affairs’ in Jefferson’s telling phrase—as distinct from the generally recognized rights of subjects to be protected by the government in the pursuit of private happiness even against public power” (Arendt, 1990/1963, p. 127).⁶⁰ More specifically, public freedom refers to the freedom to engage in political communication with fellow citizens for producing consensus and acting in concert. In her model of the public, therefore, individuals can be transformed into members of the public when they seek public freedom, rather than when they are committed to their prepolitical communities. According to Arendt, this model of the public was embodied by the ancient Greek citizens and reappeared prior to the American Revolution.

In Arendt’s model, the public is made up of people who are willing to sacrifice, in order to enjoy public freedom, the time and effort that they would devote to seeking their private interests. “This sacrifice of individual interests to the common weal,” she (1977) argued, “is compensated for by public happiness, that is, by the kind of ‘happiness’ which men can experience only in the public realm” (p. 106).⁶¹ The nature of *public happiness*, Arendt insisted, is revealed in ancient Greek citizens’ thoughts about political life. Ancient Greek citizens, according to her, dedicated their lives to politics in order to seek their immortal fame. Mortality characterizes human existence, because individual life is dependent on biological life. Ancient Greek citizens believed that for mortal human beings, the good life is to be free from the biological life process and to seek immortality. Human beings can acquire this immortality through gaining fame. In ancient Greece, political life revolved around winning this immortal

⁵⁹ “It requires courage even to leave the protective security of our four walls and enter the public realm, not because of particular dangers which may lie in wait for us, but because we have arrived in a realm where the concern for life has lost its validity. Courage liberates men from their worry about life for the freedom of the world. Courage is indispensable because in politics not life but the world is at stake.” (Arendt, 1977/1968, p. 156)

⁶⁰ In this sense, freedom is “in opposition not to authority or coercion but to material and biological necessity—to the domestic labor imposed on mankind by the demands of biological survival” (Lasch, 1983, p. v.). Arendt (1977/1961) contended that according to ancient understanding, freedom refers to “the free man’s status, which enabled him to move, to get away from home, to go out into the world and meet other people” (p. 148).

⁶¹ “[T]he American knew ... that the activities connected with this business [which refers to public freedom] by no means constituted a burden but gave those who discharged them in public a feeling of happiness they could acquire nowhere else.... [T]he people went to the town assemblies, as their representatives later were to go to the famous Conventions, neither exclusively because of duty nor, and even less, to serve their own interests but most of all because they enjoyed the discussions, the deliberations, and the making of decisions” (Arendt, 1990/1963, p.119).

fame by distinguishing oneself from all others, and showing through unique deeds or achievements that one is the best of all (Arendt, 1958, p. 41). This public happiness, Arendt emphasized, was clearly expressed in John Adams' speech about political life in America. According to him, what moved American people to the town assemblies was "the passion for distinction": more specifically, "a desire to be seen, heard, talked of, approved and respected by the people about him, and within his knowledge" (Arendt, 1990/1963, pp. 119). Elsewhere, Arendt presented a broader notion of public happiness. In this notion, public happiness is not restricted to the satisfaction of the desire to surpass other people; it refers to "the joy and the gratification that arise out of being in company with our peers, out of acting together and appearing in public, out of inserting ourselves into the world by word and deed, thus acquiring and sustaining our personal identity and beginning something entirely new" (Arendt, 1977/1968, p. 263).⁶² In order to gain this happiness, according to her, members of the public engage in political communication oriented to reaching shared judgments on political issues, instead of seeking their private interests.⁶³ In short, Arendt's public comprises seekers of public happiness rather than seekers of community interest.

The public, according to Arendt, calls for a particular form of sphere for political life—which is, in Arendt's view, the only genuine political sphere—like the Greek *polis*, which is the space of appearance where each member of the public can make her/himself distinct from others through action and speech. She (1990/1963) said:

Freedom... could exist only in public; it was a tangible, worldly reality, something created by men to be enjoyed by men rather than a gift or a capacity, it was the man-made public space or market-space which antiquity had known as the area where freedom appears and becomes visible to all. (p. 124)

Arendt called this political sphere the *public realm*. Since the public is made up of people who engage in communication with their fellow members, it requires a common public space where the members of the public can come together and interact with each other. In Arendt's view, however, the public realm does not refer merely to a topographical space like the Agora; rather,

⁶² Seyla Benhabib (1992) has argued that Arendt presented two different views of the public. Benhabib has called each of these two views *the agonistic* and *the associational* views. According to her, while the former depends on the notion of public happiness as winning fame, the latter hinges on the notion of public happiness as acting together in concert. The distinction between these two views, she has contended, "corresponds to the Greek versus the modern experience of politics" (p. 78).

⁶³ In this sense, self-realization may be a better term to describe political participation by members of the public than self-interest or self-sacrifice (see Pitkin, 1981).

it means the organization of a people that arises out of acting and speaking together (Arendt, 1958, p. 198). That is, its true space lies between people living together for the purpose of acting and speaking together (p. 198).

In order to enjoy public freedom and pleasure, individuals need the presence of other people who are in the same state: people who seek public freedom and pleasure. This company of seekers of public freedom and happiness, Arendt argued, should rely on equal relationships.⁶⁴ It is necessary to emphasize that in Arendt's view, equality does not mean sameness.⁶⁵ She believed that human beings are unique not only because they are distinct, but also because they can express this distinction and distinguish themselves from others. In this respect, human beings "are all the same in such a way that nobody is ever the same as anyone else who ever lived, lives, or will live" (Arendt, 1958, p. 8). This human plurality, Arendt emphasized, is an essential condition of the public. The members of the public should be not only non-hierarchical but also non-homogeneous. In the public realm, these non-homogenous people should get together to talk about an issue from their own different positions and perspectives (p. 57). In addition, equality required for the public is not equality of social and economic conditions. In ancient Greece, according to Arendt (1990/1963), "equality existed only in this specifically political realm, where men met one another as citizens and not as private persons" (p. 31). Ancient Greek citizens were transformed into political equals through the status of citizen in the *polis*. In this sense, "the equality of the Greek *polis* ... was an attribute of the *polis* and not of men, who received their equality by virtue of citizenship, not by virtue of birth" (p. 31). In addition to diversity and (political) equality, another characteristic of the relationship among the members of the public is that they are independent of each other. This independence means two conditions of the public: first, the members of the public are economically independent of their fellow members; second, they compete with each other for distinction. In this sense, the public is neither

⁶⁴ Arendt (1977/1968) introduced the ancient Greek understanding of the relationship between freedom and equality. According to the ancient Greek understanding, people can be free only insofar as they are equal: "The master, according to Greek common opinion (which was still blissfully unaware of Hegelian dialectics), was not free when he moved among his slaves; his freedom consisted in his ability to leave the sphere of the household altogether and to move among his equals, freeman. Hence, neither the despot nor the tyrant, the one moving among slaves, the other among subjects, could be called a free man." (p. 105)

⁶⁵ "This unitedness of many into one is basically antipolitical; it is the very opposite of the togetherness prevailing in political or commercial communities, which—to take the Aristotelian example—consist not of an association (*koinonia*) between two physicians, but between a physician and a farmer, 'and in general between people who are different and unequal.'" (Arendt, 1958, pp. 214-215)

a social and economic organization nor a political sect. In sum, the public realm builds on a company of these independent and diverse equals: in other words, a company of political peers.

It is important to note that by the public realm Arendt did not mean a mere aggregate of political communicators. The public realm depends on publicity, which means that everybody can see and hear everything that appears in public (Arendt, 1958, p. 50). The public realm is not an ephemeral political sphere; it outlives individual members' political activities and life-spans. That is, the public realm is durable and common to all members of the public. In order to capture these characteristics of the public realm, Arendt used the terms *common world* or *public world*.⁶⁶ The public realm as the common world, according to her, plays two roles. One is to provide members of the public with consistent and stable chances to win immortal fame; and, as a consequence, to multiply their political activities that Arendt called action and speech. The other is to make it possible for action and speech worthy of fame to be remembered forever.⁶⁷ Since the public realm outlasts individual members of the public, their action and speech can be remembered through the public realm. In short, the public realm refers to the institutionally articulated and durable web of human relationships. In this sense, the public realm is "a politically organized world ... into which the free people can insert themselves" (Arendt, 1977/1968, p. 148).

Arendt (1958) insisted that the political should be blocked off from two types of the *vita activa*⁶⁸ that she called *labor* and *work*: the former is the economic-related human activity about the maintenance of biological life and the survival of the species; the latter is the technical activity that corresponds to the fabrication of an artificial world of things. In Arendt's view, the political should be restricted to the issues that are open to different and plural perspectives and opinions, and, as a result, can be resolved through discussion and debate among free and diverse equals. She believed that since technical-economic issues are not based on plural perspectives

⁶⁶ Arendt (1958) described: "The common world is what we enter when we are born and what we leave behind when we die. It transcends our life-span into past and future alike; it was there before we came and will outlast our brief sojourn in it. It is what we have in common not only with those who live with us, but also with those who were here before and with those who will come after us" (p. 55). Arendt borrowed the concept of *world* from Martin Heidegger. Arendt's notion of the term, however, is not identical to that of Heidegger. For this difference between Arendt and Heidegger, see Barash, 1996.

⁶⁷ "For the *polis* was for the Greeks, as the *res publica* was for the Romans, first of all their guarantee against the futility of individual life, the space protected against this futility and reserved for the relative permanence, if not immortality, of mortals." (Arendt, 1958, p. 56)

⁶⁸ By the term *vita activa*, Arendt (1958) means three fundamental human activities: labor, work, and action. "They," she argued, "are fundamental because each corresponds to one of the basic conditions under which life on earth has been given to man" (p. 7).

and opinions, they should be dealt with by force or management and administration. Therefore, when technical-economic issues overwhelm the political, discussion and debate among citizens are marginalized in a political process. From this perspective, Arendt argued that the exclusion of technical-economic issues from the political is another condition required for the emergence of the public.

Arendt (1958) attributed the decline of the public and the public realm to the fact that problems about labor and work have become main political issues. In particular, she emphasized, as the main source of the decline of the public in the modern age, the dominance of labor: “the elevation of laboring to the highest position in the hierarchical order of the *vita activa*” (p. 306). In ancient Greece, the object of politics was distinguished and separated from any affairs related to the maintenance of individual life and the survival of species, which were considered household affairs in the private realm. Yet, these isolated economic activities that had remained within each household escaped from the confinement of the single household and became interconnected in the non-private sphere. The emergence of economic activities out of the private realm produced the rise of a new form of life process, called *society* or *the social* by Arendt, which is “the form in which the fact of mutual dependence for the sake of life and nothing else assumes public significance and where the activities connected with sheer survival are permitted to appear in public” (Arendt, 1958, p. 46). The rise of *society* is evidenced by the fact that all modern communities were transformed into societies of laborers and jobholders (p. 46). The main task of modern politics, therefore, became to manage collective economic affairs or to seek collective well-being.

Arendt (1958) maintained that the rise of *society* led to the collapse of the ancient Greek citizens’ way of political life. In her view, society is “the collective of families economically organized into the facsimile of one super-human family” (p. 29). Society, therefore, makes its members “act as though they were members of one enormous family which has only one opinion and one interest” (p. 39). The members of society are forced to follow various rules and norms, and, as a result, to be normalized (p. 40). In addition, society leads “the body of peoples and political communities” to be seen “in the image of a family whose everyday affairs have to be taken care of by a gigantic, nation-wide administration of housekeeping” (p. 28). Arendt described the political outcome of the rise of society as follows:

It is true that one-man, monarchical rule ... is transformed in society ... into a kind of no-man rule.... As we know from the most social form of government, that is, from bureaucracy (the last stage of government in the nation-state just as one-man rule in benevolent despotism and absolutism was its first), the rule by nobody is not necessarily no-rule; it may indeed, under certain circumstances, even turn out to be one of its cruelest and most tyrannical versions. (p. 40)

With the rise of society, therefore, the possibility of action and speech has been excluded from the political sphere, and the distinction and diversity of people have become private matters of individuals (pp. 40-41).

In explaining the difference between the American Revolution and the French Revolution, Arendt (1990/1963) emphasized once again that the political should be separated from the technical-economic issues. The American Revolution, according to her, was centered on the founding and constitution of a political sphere for public freedom. The American Revolution could be a revolution for public freedom because it was preceded by liberation from poverty. In contrast, the French Revolution was overwhelmed by the problem of poverty, which Arendt called *the social question*. This fact led the French Revolution to produce violence and terror, rather than establishing public freedom. Any revolutionary attempts of liberating mankind from poverty, Arendt asserted, have never been successful, resulting only in violence and terror that send revolutions to their doom (p. 112). In short, the outcome of a revolution for solving the social question is the invasion of necessity into the public realm (p. 114). In this view, Arendt contended that a revolution that is not preceded by liberation from necessity—in other words, a revolution by the poor—spells disaster for political freedom and the public realm.

In addition to the public realm and the exclusion of the technical-economic issues from the political, therefore, economic independence or liberation from poverty is a necessary condition for the public. Economic independence liberates people from the necessities of life, allowing them to spend their time and effort on engaging in political communication. This prepolitical and economic condition also contributes to leading people to participate in politics not for seeking their private interests—for solving socio-economic issues about the necessities of their lives or for making a living—but for enjoying public freedom. Economic independence, moreover, leads the members of the public to be independent of their fellow members. The ancient Greek citizen public, according to Arendt (1958), hinged on its economic status as a head

of household as much as its political status as a citizen. This economic status of ancient Greek citizens allowed them to leave their households and seek public happiness in the *polis*, and the status provided a source of diversity and independence of citizens in the *polis*.

Quite a few reviewers of Arendt's work have disapproved of her distinction between the political and the social and have criticized her exclusion of the latter from the former (Benhabib, 1992; Bernstein, 1986; Habermas, 1994; Pitkin, 1981; Wellmer, 2000; Wolin, 1994/1983). These critics have pointed out that the question of what the political or the social is should be an object of discussion and debate; that the political is interconnected with the social; that the political cannot be identical with issues that can be resolved by discussion and debate; and that socio-economic issues contain political problems requiring discussion and debate. In fact, it is obvious that Arendt's view of narrowing the political to a noninstrumental form of praxis makes her model of the public irrelevant to modern politics.⁶⁹ Her model of the public, however, can be separated from her argument that the rise of the public requires the exclusion of technical-economic issues from the political. What is important in reviewing Arendt's model of the public is not so much what issues the public should talk about as how the public should talk and how the public can emerge.

In Arendt's view, the public is a political company of people who enjoy public freedom and seek public happiness. The rise of seekers of public freedom and happiness and the formation of their company, therefore, are central elements of the public in Arendt's model. In order for individuals to be transformed into seekers of public freedom and happiness, according to her, it is necessary for them to be liberated from necessities of life. Economic independence, therefore, is an important condition of the public. In this respect, it is not surprising that Arendt's two historical cases of the public, Athenian democracy and the American Revolution, depended on slave economies. In addition, political lives of members of the public should be detached from their prepolitical lives. The goal of their political lives should not be to seek their own economic or social interests. They should participate, as independent seekers of public freedom and happiness, in political talk.

In explaining how individuals become these independent seekers of public freedom and happiness, Arendt emphasized the role of cultural factors as well as the importance of economic

⁶⁹ Christopher Lasch (1983) asserted that "it is one thing to argue that public deliberation is the essence of politics and that political leadership ought to rest on authority instead of coercion, but it is too much to claim that politics has nothing to do with the 'social question,' with the distribution of wealth and power" (p. viii-ix).

independence. In Athenian democracy, ancient Greek citizens regarded winning immortal fame as the good life and believed that they could gain such fame through action and speech in the *polis*. This specific worldview and value system was a foundation of the ancient Greek citizen public.

In Arendt's view, it is not a sufficient condition for the appearance of the public that people seek public freedom and happiness. The public can come into being when seekers of public freedom and happiness form a specific type of political company by being associated with each other as diverse and independent equals. Since Dewey's publics build on prepolitical associations, they do not need to form new companies. Arendt's publics, however, are required to form a new political association because they are detached from their prepolitical lives. In this political association, individual members of the public are competitive with each other because they desire to excel in political activity, and they are supportive of each other because their public happiness cannot be gained without others' approval, agreement, or respect. This competitive and supportive companionship, Arendt argued, can be maintained when it build on an enduring political institution where each member can communicate with others and make oneself distinct from others by communicative practice. In sum, a competitive friendship-based company and its institution for public communication are necessary conditions for the rise of Arendt's publics.

The public as public users of reason: Jürgen Habermas (1929-)

According to Habermas (1989/1962), the public has its historical origin in ancient Greek citizens of the *polis*. Since the collapse of the Greek model of the public, the public had remained just a normative term. In Habermas's view, however, the type of people who can be categorized into the public reappeared in eighteenth-century Western Europe: particularly, England, France, and Germany. The new public was made up of the bourgeois who sought agreement and enlightenment through the rational-critical public debate.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Many historical scholars who study political culture in the early modern Western Europe have criticized Habermas's emphasis of the bourgeois character of the eighteenth-century public and public sphere (see Baker, 1992; Melton, 2001; Munck, 2000; Zaret, 1992, 2000). They have insisted that members of what Habermas has called the *bourgeois public* were not restricted to the bourgeois. Nobles and middle-class men of letters, they argued, were important parts of the eighteenth-century public. Unlike these critics of Habermas, Craig Calhoun (1992) has argued that what made, in Habermas's view, the public sphere bourgeois was not simply the class composition of its members, but the fact that the public sphere was shaped by the bourgeois society (p. 7). Critics of Habermas, however, has contended that the eighteenth-century public was shaped and influenced more by other factors than by

The characteristics of the bourgeois differed from those of the ancient Greek citizens. The Greek citizens had twofold statuses: citizens in the *polis* and masters in the household. They also believed that the good life is to engage in discussion and debate in the *polis* for gaining immortal fame. These dual statuses and beliefs of the Greek citizens, according to Hannah Arendt (1958), led them to form independent and equal relationships and to engage in discussion and debate for persuasion and agreement. In short, these relationships and communicative practices were the foundation of the ancient Greek citizen public. Yet, the bourgeois had neither such statuses nor similar political beliefs. Unlike the ancient Greek citizens, the bourgeois were both private people who were excluded from any share in public authority and private interest-seekers who cannot be completely separated from their economic activities.

In Habermas's view, nevertheless, the bourgeois formed themselves into the public. The bourgeois had two statuses: a head of a conjugal family—which was considered an intimate sphere for spouses and their children—and a commodity owner in the market.⁷¹ As a result, according to Habermas (1989/1962), the bourgeois as privatized individuals had dual identities: a human being, *homme*, and a commodity owner, *bourgeois*. These twofold statuses and corresponding dual self-images of the bourgeois, Habermas has argued, played central roles in bringing the bourgeois public into being.

Habermas has argued that the bourgeois formed an identity of common human beings, which emerged out of the sphere of the bourgeois family. According to him, members of the bourgeois family believed that, in their families, they built lasting communities of love and cultivated each other's personalities. In addition to these two ideological elements, the market economy provided the bourgeois family with its third ideological element: voluntariness. In a commodity market that was emancipated from direct controls by the state, the bourgeois as community owners could make decisions freely, based on their economic rationality. Their decision-making was subject only to the anonymous laws of the market. The freedom of choice in the market, along with the notion that the market exchange is just, led the bourgeois to view themselves as autonomous (p. 44). This image of private autonomy of the bourgeois as

the bourgeois society: for example, the Enlightenment (Melton, 2001; Munck, 2000), communicative change and print culture (Melton, 2001, Munck, 2000; Zaret, 1992, 2000), Protestantism (Zaret, 1992, 2000), or political imagination (Baker, 1990, 1992).

⁷¹ Unlike a pre-bourgeois type of family, which was an extended family, a bourgeois type of family was a conjugal family (Habermas, 1989/1962).

commodity owners led them to think that their family “seemed to be established voluntarily and by free individuals, and to be maintained without coercion” (p. 46). Habermas has contended:

These three elements of voluntariness, community of love, and cultivation were conjoined in a concept of the humanity that was supposed to inhere in humankind as such and truly to constitute its absoluteness: the emancipation (still resonating with talk of “pure” or “common” humanity) of an inner realm, following its own laws, from extrinsic purposes of any sort. (p. 47)

In short, unlike the ancient Greek household that was, in Arendt’s view, the private sphere of necessity and hierarchy, the bourgeois conjugal family was, according to Habermas, regarded as the sphere of humanity-generating closeness. Through this image of the family, the bourgeois identified themselves with common human beings.

In the intimate sphere of the conjugal family, thus, the bourgeois “viewed themselves as independent even from the private sphere of their economic activity” (Habermas, 1989/1962, p. 48). As a result, they were “capable of entering into ‘purely human’ relations with one another” (p. 48). The literary form of these relations, Habermas has argued, was the letter. Through letter writing, “the individual unfolded himself in his subjectivity” (p. 48). In the process of communication through letter exchange, the subjectivity of the privatized individual was oriented to an audience or publicity. Habermas has named this communicative subjectivity the *audience-oriented subjectivity*. This type of subjectivity led the bourgeois to come together in new forms of associations—such as book clubs, reading circles, and subscription libraries—and, as a result, to form what Habermas called “a reading public.” This reading public “reflected critically and in public on what they had read, thus contributing to the process of enlightenment which they together promoted” (p. 51). In this respect, these associations as the social nodes of a literary culture, Habermas (1989/1962, 1992) has asserted, provided the training ground for critical public reflection. While the bourgeois’ identity of human beings was a source of independent and equal relationships of the bourgeois public, the association of the identity and a new communicative form of letter exchange led to the rise of audience-oriented subjectivity, from which the bourgeois’ practice of making public use of reason—in other words, communicative practice of rational-critical public debate—sprang.⁷²

⁷² For Immanuel Kant’s notion of *public use of reason*, see Arendt (1982), Chambers (1995), Chartier (1991), Foucault (1984), Kant (1991/1784), Laursen (1986), and O’Neill (1986).

In addition to the audience-oriented subjectivity, the economic condition of the bourgeois contributed to the rise of rational-critical public debate. The bourgeois' status as commodity owners provided the bourgeois with economic independence. This economic independence allowed the bourgeois to engage in communication activities that were "not directly subject to the cycle of production and consumption, that is, to the dictates of life's necessities" (Habermas, 1989/1962, p. 160). For the bourgeois public, therefore, the "affairs that private people pursued individually each in the interests of the reproduction of his own life" were separated from "the sort of interaction that united private people into a public" (p. 160). This led the bourgeois to be able to engage in rational-critical public debate.

Habermas (1989/1962) has argued that the bourgeois public had its early institutions: the coffee houses in England, the *salons* in France, and the *Tischgesellschaften* (the table societies) in Germany. These institutions led to the rise of parity—as the educated—between the aristocracy and bourgeois intellectuals. This equality relied on the fact that the early institutions of the public were separated from the outside world. In short, it was the equality—as common human beings—that exists outside of political life (p. 35). In this sense, the early institutions of the bourgeois public were like enclaves surrounded by hierarchical society and the absolute state. Even though critical debate in the institutions was centered on philosophy, literature, and art, it was easily extended to include political issues. Such debate about political issues, however, was not influential on state policies, at least in the immediate context, because the institutions were disconnected from the political realm.

In contrast to the negligible political effects of the early institutions of the public, the principles to frame discussion in the institutions had a crucial influence on subsequent development of the bourgeois public. Habermas (1989/1962) has presented three key institutional criteria that the early institutions of the public shared. The first is the parity of common humanity. Private people in the coffee houses, the *salons*, and the table societies considered themselves equals, because they believed they shared the common quality as human beings in the sense that they can make public use of their reason. In this respect, Habermas has argued that the early institutions of the public "preserved a kind of social intercourse that, far from presupposing the equality of status, disregarded status altogether" (p. 36). In these institutions, therefore, the authority of arguments was determined by the "better" argument. Second, the members of the early institutions tried to make their own judgments of common

issues through rational communication with one another. They did not restrict their critical judging to the issues about which they had been allowed to make their own judgment. On the contrary, they applied their critical judging to such areas as philosophy, literature, and art, within which, until then, religious and political authorities had had the monopoly of interpretation. Lastly, even though the public in the early institutions consisted of a narrow range of people, the institutions were in principle open to all private people, “persons who—insofar as they were propertied and educated—as readers, listeners, and spectators could avail themselves via the market of the objects that were subject to discussion” (p. 37). Habermas has argued that “the public of the first generation, even when it constituted itself as a specific circle of persons, was conscious of being part of a larger public” (p. 37). The principle of inclusiveness led the public in the coffee house, the *salons*, and the table societies to be easily immersed in a larger public that consisted of broad strata of the bourgeoisie. Even after this expansion of the public, however, these three institutional criteria remained as principles for framing discussion by the bourgeois public. In short, the art of critical-rational public debate continued to be a main principle of the bourgeois public.

With the commercialization of culture, critical-rational debate was diffused outside of the coffee houses, the *salons*, and the table societies. The commercialization of literature contributed to the rise of a general reading public, who “transcended the republic of scholars and the urban bourgeoisie and who no longer limited themselves to a careful reading and rereading of a few standard works but oriented their reading habits to an ongoing stream of new publications” (Habermas, 1992a, p. 423). In addition to the reading public, various types of new art publics, such as the theater-going public and the concert-going public, appeared with the commercialization of cultural production. The emergence of these broad art publics transformed art from an instrument of social representation to an object of free choice and of changing preference, leading the judgment of lay people—more precisely educated bourgeois who had neither social privilege nor a specialized competence about art—to be a critical authority in the assessment of art (Habermas, 1989/1962, p. 40).

The rise of lay judgment, on the one hand, made connoisseurs lose their privileged position to assess art. On the other hand, it led “discussion” to be “the medium through which people appropriated art” (Habermas, 1989/1962, p. 40). This art criticism as discussion led to the emergence of new professional art critics. According to Habermas, the task of the new art critics

was dialectical; they were at once spokesmen for and educators of the public. When the art critics debated with artists about their art, the critics presented themselves as members of the public. They, in fact, did not differ from the public in terms of the fact that the “better” argument was a main source of authority in debates. The art critics, however, “could turn against the public itself when, as experts combating ‘dogma’ and ‘fashion’, they appealed to the ill-informed person’s native capacity for judgment” (p. 41). Art critics as the spokesmen for and educators of the public had to be able to be exposed to the entire “great” public, which grew beyond the coffee houses, the *salons* and the table societies. The periodical, therefore, became a medium of art criticism, making it possible for the “great” public composed of various circles to maintain contact among different circles. In addition to the role of integrating and organizing the diffused public, the periodical brought the public to its self-understanding. The periodical represented the process of discussion by the public, and discussed the public itself and discussion itself. With the rise of the periodical, the public could read and debate about itself (p. 43). In the periodical, therefore, “the public held up a mirror to itself” (p. 43). In short, the press and its professional criticism held together the “great” public.

As the critical debates in the early institutions of the bourgeois public were easily broadened to include political issues, it is no wonder that the expanded bourgeois public was transformed from a literary and art public into a political public. This transformation of the bourgeois public, however, was interconnected with the economic and political conditions of the bourgeois: the rise and differentiation of the modern state and civil society. By civil society Habermas (1989/1962) has meant the realm of commodity exchange and social labor. The rise of a commodity market—which Arendt (1958) referred to as *the private sphere of society that has become publicly relevant*—drove the process of economic production to escape from the confinement of the single household. The market economy produced interconnections and mutual dependence of economic activities that had remained isolated in the private sphere, leading to the necessity of public direction and supervision by the state. The expansion of the market and trade led to the rise of the modern state as public authority, which is characterized by depersonalization, a permanent administration, a standing army, taxation as a main economic source, and a monopoly over the legitimate use of coercion. The main task of the modern state was to guide and regulate market and economic life. No stratum of civil society had been more influenced by the economic policies of the modern state than the bourgeois such as capitalists,

merchants, bankers, entrepreneurs, and manufacturers. In the process of being influenced by state policies, the bourgeois as commodity owners began to identify themselves with the counterpart of public authority and to challenge its economic policies. The conflict between public regulation and private initiative was expanded with the pervasiveness of capitalist production, which made broad strata of the population “affected in their daily existence as consumers by the regulations of mercantilist policy” (Habermas, 1989/1962, p. 24). Accordingly, the zone in which the modern state had contact with private people through continuous administrative acts became problematic, provoking “the critical judgment of a public making use of its reason” (p. 24). Political issues, therefore, became central topics in discussion and debate by the bourgeois public.

In addition to the politicization of the bourgeois literary public, the rise of political press and the expansion of democracy contributed to leading the bourgeois public to become a source of political authority. The political press, on the one hand, represented rational-critical arguments of the bourgeois public in the political realm. On the other hand, it exposed political decisions of the state to the ongoing public commentary and criticism. The exposure of political affairs and political deliberation to the critical public compelled the political authorities to legitimate themselves before the public. This interconnection between political authority and the bourgeois public was facilitated by political conflicts about state decisions within the political realm. In Great Britain, the minority in Parliament often brought their arguments out of Parliament, appealing to the judgment of the bourgeois public. The minority’s appeal to the public made the majority “consider itself bound to legitimate the authority at its disposal by reference to reason against the oppositions’ claims to the contrary” (Habermas, 1989/1962, p. 63). The rise of the bourgeois public, therefore, led political opposition at the national level to be “the form of a permanent controversy between the governing party and the opposition” (p. 64). The rise of the politically influential bourgeois public reached its final stage when a great majority of the bourgeois public obtained the right to vote. With the expansion of the right to vote, political parties began to issue their election platforms before the bourgeois public. As one outcome of the interconnection between politics and the bourgeois public, the judgment of private people about political issues, subsequently called public opinion, became a new source of political authority.

The political function of the bourgeois public differed from that of the ancient Greek public, which was acting in common, such as administration of law (regarding internal affairs)

and military survival (regarding external affairs).⁷³ Since the bourgeois were private people, the bourgeois public was located in the private realm. The political function of the bourgeois public, therefore, was to produce public opinion, rather than to make final decisions of political issues.⁷⁴ The bourgeois public as carriers of public opinion challenged the authority of public power. In this sense, the bourgeois public was critical and polemical. According to Habermas (1989/1962), “public opinion was formed in the conflict of arguments concerning a substantive issue, not uncritically based on common sense in the either naïve or plebiscitarily manipulated assent to or vote about persons” (p. 66-67). In this debate, the source of authority was the “better” argument. Habermas has called this principle of public opinion formation *critical publicity*.

In the process of engaging in rational-critical public debate, the bourgeois became interconnected with each other in the third sphere of the private realm—which Habermas (1989/1962) called the *public sphere*—that was separated from the market and the intimate sphere. This bourgeois public, according to Habermas, belonged to two different forms of the public sphere: the literary and the political public spheres. In the former, the bourgeois public as common human beings “communicated through critical debate in the world of letters, about experiences of their subjectivity” (Habermas, 1989/1962, p. 55). In the latter, the bourgeois public as *bourgeois* “communicated through rational-critical debate in the political realm, concerning the regulation of their private sphere” (p. 55). These two forms of the public sphere were not completely congruous in terms of their members or functions. For example, even though women and dependents were often active members in the literary public sphere, they were factually and legally excluded from the political public sphere (p. 56). The bourgeois public as common human beings sought agreement and enlightenment in the literary public sphere, whereas the real function of the political public sphere was to increase the class interest of the bourgeois.

The bourgeois public, nevertheless, considered the two forms of the public sphere one and indivisible. “The representation of the interests of the privatized domain of a market

⁷³This is Habermas’s view of the political role of the ancient Greek public (see Habermas 1962/1989, p. 52).

⁷⁴ Habermas (1989/1962) has distinguished public opinion from its contemporary notion—which he has called *nonpublic opinion*—which refers to the sum of individuals’ preferences or attitudes of political objects or issues. He has described public opinion as “a critical authority in connection with the normative mandate that the exercise of political and social power be subject to publicity,” and non-public opinion as “the object to be molded in connection with a staged display of, and manipulative propagation of, publicity in the service of persons and institutions, consumer goods, and programs” (p. 236). See Habermas (1962/1989, pp 236-244) and Price (1992) for the difference between the two conceptions of public opinion.

economy,” Habermas has argued (1989/1962), “was interpreted with the aid of ideas grown in the soil of the intimate sphere of the conjugal family” (p. 51). That is, the bourgeois public believed that the objective function of the political public sphere could converge with human relations and institutional principles that framed the literary public sphere. In the bourgeois public’s view, the political public sphere relied, in principle, on universal access and validity. This assumption of the bourgeois public depended on the idea that “each man have an equal chance... to attain the status of property owner and thus of ‘man,’ that is, the qualification of a private person admitted to the public sphere—property and education” (p. 87). The bourgeois public’s self-understanding of the fictitious identity of the two public spheres was also facilitated “by the fact that [the political public sphere] actually had positive functions in the context of the political emancipation of civil society from mercantilist rule and from absolutistic regimentations in general” (p. 56). In the bourgeois public’s self-interpretation, therefore, “the interest of the bourgeois class could be identified with the general interest and the third estate could be set up as the nation—during that phase of capitalism” (p. 87). For the bourgeois public, accordingly, “there was no break between *homme* and *citoyan*, as long as the *homme* was simultaneously an owner of private property who as *citoyan* was to protect the stability of the property order as a private one” (p. 87). As a result, even though “class interest was the basis of public opinion” in the bourgeois public sphere, the economic interest of the bourgeois must have been “objectively congruent with the general interest, at least to the extent that this opinion could be considered the public one, emerging from the critical debate of the public, and consequently, rational” (p. 87).

Unlike the public in Dewey’s model, the public in Habermas’s model does not depend on a naturally given condition of human life. As in Arendt’s model, the public refers, in Habermas’s model, to a company for public discussion formed by people who can afford part of their lives for political activities free from the dictates of life’s necessities. Hence, the public requires the rise of people who are free from the problem of material survival and motivated for engaging in public discussion, the establishment of their communication networks for discussion and debate, and the formation of their independent and equal relationships.

Habermas (1989/1962) has argued that in eighteenth-century Western Europe, the bourgeois formed companies for rational-critical public debate in which the *better argument* was the only source of authority.⁷⁵ In Habermas’s view, the bourgeois’ transformation into the public

⁷⁵ The rise of these bourgeois companies was well captured by Kant’s expression that Habermas (1989/1962) has

relied on the division of the private sphere into the intimate sphere—the conjugal family—and market. While in the latter the bourgeois had a status of a commodity owner in the latter, in the former the bourgeois considered themselves common human beings free from their economic position. In bringing the bourgeois public into being, the bourgeois' economic status as a commodity owner played the similar role that ancient Greek citizens' status as the master of household had played for the rise of the ancient Greek citizen public. The status of commodity owners led the bourgeois to be free from the necessity of life and to be independent of each other. While ancient Greek citizens maintained equality in the public realm through their status as citizens, the bourgeois formed equal relationships in the public sphere through their self-understanding as common human beings, which arose out of the intimate sphere of the bourgeois. Arendt (1958) argued that the foundation of the ancient Greek citizen public was destroyed due to both the differentiation of the intimate sphere with the economic sphere—which she called the social—and the transformation of the economic sphere from a component of the private space into a component of the public space. In Habermas's view, however, these destroyers of Arendt's public were the foundation of the bourgeois public.

This imagination of common human beings was combined with a new form of communicative activities, letter exchange, to produce what Habermas has called *audience-oriented subjectivity*, which led the bourgeois to engage in rational-critical debate. That is, while the desire to gain public happiness motivated ancient Greek citizens to engage in public discussion, both the identity of common human beings and the audience-oriented subjectivity guided the bourgeois to enjoy public discussion. In this respect, while the members of the public in Arendt's model are political subjects, the members of the public in Habermas's model are communicative subjects.

The bourgeois public formed, at first, its networks of public communication in the coffee house, the *salons*, and the table societies. With the rise of a reading public, these networks began to be established in bourgeois associations such as book clubs, reading circles, subscription libraries, secret freemasonry lodges, and orders of *illuminati*. The development of printing technology and the commercialization of culture expanded the communication networks of the bourgeois public from voluntary associations to the periodical and the press.

quoted: "If we attend to the course of conversation in mixed companies consisting not merely of scholars and subtle reasoners but also of business people or women, we notice that besides storytelling and jesting they have another entertainment, namely, arguing" (p. 106).

The bourgeois public was initially formed as companies for discussion and debate about literature and art. Unlike Dewey's and Arendt's models, therefore, it is, in Habermas's model, important to explain how the non-political bourgeois public became politicized: in other words, how communicative subjects turned into political-communicative subjects. In explaining this change, he has emphasized two conditions: the economic condition of the bourgeois and the existence of the state separated from civil society. The transformation of the bourgeois public into the political public took place, according to Habermas, in conflictive interactions between the bourgeois' economic interest and state policies. The rise of political press and the expansion of democracy, he has also argued, made a contribution to the politicization of the bourgeois public.⁷⁶

As in Dewey's and Arendt's models, cultural factors played, for Habermas, crucial roles in bringing the bourgeois public into existence. The identity of common human beings and the audience-oriented subjectivity were the cornerstone of the bourgeois public. In addition, the bourgeois' self-interpretation with regard to the interconnection between their twofold statuses played an important role in turning the literary bourgeois public into the political bourgeois public. What drove the bourgeois to talk about political issues was their economic interest. Yet, even when the bourgeois engaged in this political communication, they considered themselves common human beings rather than economic interest-seekers. That is, in the bourgeois' self-interpretation, the identity of a commodity owner is identified with another identity of a human being. Due to this self-interpretation, the bourgeois not only believed that they as common human beings engaged in public debate about political issues, but also sought this engagement. Hence, publicity became a principle in the bourgeois political public sphere. In short, what shaped the bourgeois' economic interest into public discussion was their self-interpretation. In this sense, Habermas (1989/1962) asserted that the self-interpretation by the bourgeois was "ideology and simultaneously more than ideology" (p. 88).⁷⁷ "On the basis of the continuing

⁷⁶ See Melton, 2001 for the role of the development of democracy and the rise of the political press in bringing the political bourgeois public into existence.

⁷⁷ Habermas has emphasized the influence of "belief" or "imagination" on the formation of the subjectivity of the bourgeois public (see, for the influence of belief or idea on human action, Merton, 1968; Sahlins, 1981, 1985; Thomas & Thomas, 1970/1928; Weber, 1992/1930). Habermas's argument is worth quoting completely: "Although the needs of bourgeois society were not exactly kind to the family's self-image as a sphere of humanity-generating closeness, the ideas of freedom, love, and cultivation of the person that grew out of the experiences of the conjugal family's private sphere were surely more than just ideology. As an objective meaning contained as an element in the structure of the actual institution, and without whose subjective validity society would not have been able to reproduce itself, these ideas were also reality. In the form of this specific notion of humanity a conception of what

domination of one class over another,” he has contended, “the dominant class nevertheless developed political institutions which credibly embodied as their objective meaning the idea of their own abolition” (p. 88).

In Habermas’s view, the bourgeois public stemmed not only from the statuses and self-understanding of the bourgeois but also from changes in communication technology. First of all, the bourgeois companies for rational-critical public debate depended on mediated communication—such as letters, books, pamphlets, and newspapers—as well as face-to-face communication in the coffee houses, the *salons*, the table societies, or voluntary associations.⁷⁸ The role of communication technologies is not restricted to providing the bourgeois with a new means of communication and networks. Changes in communication technology led to changes in communication structure and practice, which contributed to bringing new political culture and practice into being. According to Habermas (1989/1962), the traffic in news, along with the traffic in commodities, led to both the rise of the modern state and the differentiation between the state and civil society; letter exchange formed the audience-oriented subjectivity; the development of printing technology made way for the commercialization of culture, contributing to the rise of a general reading or art public; the periodical not only integrated diffused publics, but also objectified their practices and images, having an influence on molding self-understanding of the public; the rise of political press propagated political interest in the state’s political decisions, leading its audiences to discuss the state’s decisions and to be critical about such decisions; and political press, along with the development of democracy, pressed the state to legitimate their political decisions before the public. These cases show the importance of communication technologies in Habermas’s model of the public.⁷⁹ From this perspective, British sociologist John B. Thompson (1995) has summarized Habermas’s argument in *Structural*

existed was promulgated within the bourgeois world which promised redemption from the constraint of what existed without escaping into a transcendental real. This conception’s transcendence of what was immanent was the element of truth that raised bourgeois ideology above ideology itself, most fundamentally in that area where the experience of ‘humanity’ originated: in the humanity of the intimate relationships between human beings who, under the aegis of the family, were nothing more than human.” (Habermas, 1989/1962, p. 48)

⁷⁸ In this sense, Dahlgren (2001a) has argued that the bourgeois public sphere consisted of the mixture of face-to-face and mediated communications (p. 33).

⁷⁹ “The infrastructure of the public sphere has changed along with the forms of organizations, marketing, and consumption of a professionalized book production that operates on a larger scale and is oriented to new strata of readers, and of a newspaper and periodical press whose contents have also not remained the same. It changed with the rise of the electronic mass media, the new relevance of advertising, the increasing fusion of entertainment and information, the greater centralization in all areas, the collapse of the liberal associational life, the collapse of surveyable public spheres on the community level, etc.” (Habermas, 1992a, p. 436)

Transformation of Public Sphere, as follows:

The great strength of Habermas's early work is that it treats the development of the media as an integral part of the formation of modern societies. He argued that the circulation of printed material in early modern Europe played a crucial role in the transition from absolutist to liberal-democratic regimes, and that the articulation of critical public opinion through the media was a vital feature of modern democratic life. (p. 7)

In Habermas's view, in short, the bourgeois public is not a mere outcome of the combination between the social conditions and cultural factors of the bourgeois, but a construct by the interactions between new communication technologies and the bourgeois as economic, cultural, and political subjects.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have reviewed three models of the public—which refers to a company of people who engage in discussion and debate about political matters—that have been presented by John Dewey (1954/1927), Hannah Arendt (1958, 1990/1963, 1977/1968), and Jürgen Habermas (1989/1962, 1992), respectively. In this review, I have focused on the three scholars' ideas about a subjectivity of the public and its formation.

What sets the public apart from other types of political actors is that the former is composed of not only political but also communicative subjects in the sense that its members are willing to engage in discussion and debate about political matters with fellow citizens in order to share political judgments and, ideally, to reach agreement. More specifically, the members of the public have three main common features in their ways of thinking and feeling: first, they are interested in politics and willing to engage in political discussion and debate with fellow citizens; second, in participating in political discussion and debate, they are oriented to sharing political judgments and reaching agreement, rather than seeking their private interests such as individual economic interests or political and social groups' interests; third, they regard fellow citizens as their political equals and communication partners. Central to studying a subjectivity of the public is how these ways of thinking and feeling emerge. In their models of the public, Dewey, Arendt, and Habermas each provide their own answers to this question.

In Dewey's model, the members of the public are seekers of the common interest of their community. Dewey believed that if individuals keep faith in democratic values and seek the

common interest, they would be willing to participate in a political process and to engage in communication about political matters with fellow community members.

The decline of the public in modern society, according to Dewey, has come from the fact that the expansion of a human association by the development of transportation and communicative technology has not been followed by a corresponding development of communicative networks and systems. This rupture between an expanded association—which Dewey called a great society—and its communicative networks and systems has led the members of a great society to fail to recognize that they share the common interest. As a consequence, they have lost their sense of community and interest in politics, instead concentrating on seeking their private interests.

In order to recover the public in modern society, according to Dewey, it is necessary to lead individual members of a great society to recognize the fact that they share the common interest and to develop their sense of community. In this sense, for Dewey, the public is something that should be perceived and cultivated. He emphasized the importance of three factors that would contribute to the recovery of the public: the development of new communicative networks and systems that correspond with a great society, the revitalization of local community, and the maintenance of the faith in the values of democracy and the democratic capability of human beings.

Unlike Dewey, Arendt argued that the recognition of the common interest does not transform individuals into members of the public, because private interests always get the better of individuals. According to her, moreover, political attempts to seek the common interest concerning economic and social affairs lead not to the rise of the public but to the rise of the administrative and bureaucratic rule. From this perspective, she argued that the decline of the public in modern society has stemmed from the fact that economic and social affairs—which are, in Arendt's view, prepolitical affairs—have become central topics of politics.

Individuals, according to Arendt, can become members of the public when they are transformed from economic and social subjects into the political subjects who enjoy public freedom and seek public happiness. In Arendt's view, concisely, the members of the public are seekers of public freedom and happiness, rather than seekers of the community interest. Public freedom means, in a practical sense, to engage in political discussion and debate with fellow citizens for producing consensus and acting in concert. Arendt emphasized earning fame as a

main source of public happiness. In her view, however, the sources of public happiness are not restricted to earning fame; they also include joy and gratification of participating in a political process, acting together, and initiating something new.

Arendt provided three necessary conditions for the rise of the public. First, the members of the public should be able to be liberated from economic activities. Second, economic and technical issues should be precluded from politics. Third, since the members of the public should be detached from their prepolitical lives, they need to create a new political space—which Arendt called the public realm—that brings them together on an equal footing and where public freedom appears. The public realm is not a mere sphere for political communication; rather, it is both an institution for the remembrance of excellent speech and action and a “space of appearance” in which individuals can display themselves through speech and action.

These three conditions alone, however, are not sufficient for the transformation of individuals into seekers of public freedom and happiness. The political desires of seeking public freedom and happiness should be created in individuals’ minds. In explaining how ancient Greek citizens became seekers of public freedom and happiness, Arendt emphasized the roles of the Greek citizens’ aspirations and beliefs with regard to the good life. Greek citizens, according to her, were eager to gain eternal life, because they regarded the good life of humans as individual mortals as overcoming their mortality. They also believed that humans can gain immortality by winning fame through political competition with political equals. The worldview and value system, Arendt claimed, led Greek citizens to dedicate their lives to seeking public freedom and happiness in the public realm, rather than seeking private interests in the private realm. In short, cultural values and beliefs played, in Arendt’s view, central roles in bringing the ancient Greek citizen public into being.

While the members of the public are primarily characterized by communal subjects in Dewey’s model and by political subjects in Arendt’s model, they are, in Habermas’s model, principally defined as communicative subjects. The members of the bourgeois public, according to Habermas, were the communicative actors who make public use of reason. This communicative feature of the bourgeois public, he argued, was founded on audience-oriented subjectivity and the identity of common human beings. This identity and subjectivity led the bourgeois to be willing to engage in rational-critical public debate. In Habermas’s view, the

bourgeois public emerged, at first, as a company of people who debated topics concerning literature and art and began, later, to debate political matters.

In Habermas's model, there are two stages in the process of the transformation of individual bourgeois into members of the political bourgeois public. The first is the stage in which individual bourgeois became the communicative subjects who are willing to engage in rational-critical public debate. In the second stage, these communicative subjects turned into the political-communicative subjects who apply the norm of rational-critical publicity to political communication.

In explaining the first stage of the transformation of individual bourgeois into members of the bourgeois public, Habermas emphasized the rise of new senses and notions—such as audience-oriented subjectivity and the identity of common human beings—that frame and shape the bourgeois' self-understanding, their relationships with other people, and their communicative actions. These senses and notions, he argued, led the bourgeois to turn into a new type of communicative subjects—public users of reason—and to form a new type of sociability. The imaginary elements arose primarily out of the bourgeois' experience in the conjugal family. But their appearance and development were also interconnected with the interactions and associations among social, cultural, economic, communicative, and technological factors: the separation of the private sphere into the market and the intimate sphere; the bourgeois' economic condition; the bourgeois' images about the conjugal family and free market; new forms of communicative interactions and networks; and print culture and the commercialization of culture.

The central factors in the second stage—the transformation from the non-political public to the political public—include the bourgeois' economic interest, the separation and the interaction between state and civil society, the expansion of democracy, the rise of political press, and the bourgeois' self-understanding in which the bourgeois as seekers of class interest were identified with common human beings as public users of reason. The interactions and associations among these economic, political, communicative, technological, and cultural factors, according to Habermas, led the bourgeois to engage in political communication and to apply the norm of rational-critical publicity to their communication about political matters.

Unlike in Arendt's model, the members of the bourgeois public in Habermas's model were not separated from their prepolitical lives. On the contrary, the bourgeois public stemmed from the conditions of and experience in the bourgeois' prepolitical life. The communicative

practice of rational-critical public debate and the sociability of the bourgeois public—which were the foundations of the bourgeois public—hinged on the bourgeois’ understandings of themselves, communicative action, and politics. These understandings arose out of the bourgeois’ experience in the intimate sphere and were shaped and developed by complex interactions and associations among social, political, economic, communicative, cultural, and technological factors. In this sense, the public is, for Habermas, something that should be imagined and constructed.

In brief, Dewey, Arendt, and Habermas have provided different forms of a subjectivity of the public, which shapes the motivation of its members for engaging in political discussion with fellow citizens and molds their view of fellow citizens as voluntary, equal, and disinterested political subjects. The members of the public are, for Dewey, the communal subjects who commit themselves to their community and seek the common interest; for Arendt, the political subjects who seek public freedom and happiness; and for Habermas, the communicative subjects who make public use of reason.

In explaining how a subjectivity of the public emerged or can emerge, the three scholars also seem to have different images of the formation of the public. The public is, for Dewey, something that should be perceived and cultivated; for Arendt, something that should be created; and, for Habermas, something that should be imagined and constructed.

Despite this difference, the three scholars share the idea that the subjectivity of the public hinges on cultural factors: in Dewey’s model, on the recognition of the community interest, democratic faith, and the moral and emotional attachment to community; in Arendt’s model, on political goals and desires of public freedom and happiness, an idea of the good life, and free and equal companionship in Arendt’s model; and, in Habermas’s model, on audience-oriented subjectivity and self-imagination as common human beings. The public, thus, is a cultural construct in the three models.

Another common idea in Dewey’s, Arendt’s, and Habermas’s models is that communication and its technology play crucial roles in the rise of the public. Since the public is made up of political-communicative subjects, it is no wonder that communicative practices and networks are central to the public. In the three models, however, communicative practices and networks are not the mere outcomes of the rise of the public but factors that play important roles in bringing the public into existence. In Dewey’s model, communication leads individuals to recognize the existence of the common interest and to develop emotional attachment to their

community. Arendt regarded communication networks not only as networks for political communication but also as a foundation of both a stage for speech and action and an institution of memory for excellent speech and action. According to Habermas, communication was central to the rise of the bourgeois public: more specifically, constructing a new identity, forming a new form of sociability, and increasing political interest. He has also emphasized the importance of changes in communication technology. In his view, the development of print culture led to expanding and holding up the bourgeois public, and the rise of the political press contributed to transforming the literary bourgeois public into the political public. In Dewey's, Arendt's, and Habermas's models, in short, communication and its technology are central factors in transforming individuals into members of the public.

The importance of communication and its technology in the rise of the public is demonstrated by a cultural change in South Korean politics—investigated in this study—that is taking place with the development of online political communication. As will be shown, the growth of Internet-based communicative actions and networks has bolstered the subjectivity that characterizes a new form of the public, which I call *simin public*. In subsequent chapters, I will explore the nature of this subjectivity and how it has emerged. This exploration will be conducted with comparison with the three models of the public—which I examined in this chapter—in mind.

Chapter 3

Communication Power without Authority and Political Communication without Power: The South Korean Context of Online Political Talk

This chapter is concerned with the South Korean context in which online political talk among ordinary citizens has emerged. In examining this context, I focus on public communication about contemporary affairs and public issues: in short, political communication.⁸⁰ Specifically, I discuss two factors—which have played crucial roles in shaping the action and culture of online-talk participants—that have framed South Korean political communication in recent years: the critical sense of the mainstream news media and the structural transformation of political communication by the Internet.

In South Korea, mainstream news media have been regarded as central forces in politics since the collapse of the authoritarian regime in 1987. These news media have been widely believed to be powerful not just in guiding popular opinion but also in shaping the course of public affairs. Many South Korean citizens, however, have been critical of the news media. These critical citizens have considered the news media to provide distorted images of reality and biased views of public affairs. They have thought that the news media put their interest and bias ahead of the norm of professional journalism. In the critical citizens' view, the news media do not carry authoritative public voices about public matters. In this sense, the power of the mainstream news media has been cut off from authority as a public voice.

This critical view of the mainstream news media, as will be explored in subsequent chapters, has played an important role in forming online political talk among ordinary citizens and its culture in South Korea. Most online-talk participants are critics of the news media. Their sense of grievance against the news media is a crucial factor that motivates them to engage in online political talk. The news media's stories such as news, commentary, and opinion are central topics of online political talk. Many online-talk participants make sense of their political talk through contrasting it to the practice of the news media. They consider their communicative actions to be valuable because these actions offer what the news media fail to provide. In short,

⁸⁰ Even though political communication is a central part of the South Korean context that has framed online political communication and its culture, this context is not reduced to political communication. Readers who are seeking to gain a broader understanding of South Korea's social and political context may consult Armstrong (2007b), Cumings (1997), Lie (1998), and Koo (1993c).

the action and culture of online-talk participants have been formulated in their critical response to the mainstream news media's power without authority.

Before discussing the action and culture of online-talk participants, therefore, I need to explain their sense of the mainstream news media. It may not be surprising that the news media are considered to be powerful in politics and to be biased in reporting public matters, since this sense is found in many other countries as well. What makes the critical sense of the news media significant in South Korea, however, is that this sense has been prevalent among ordinary citizens, strong enough to motivate many citizens' political participation, and profound enough to play a key role in shaping these participatory citizens' self-understanding.

The primary goal of this chapter is to make sense of South Korean citizens' critical view of the mainstream news media, in which these news media are considered to carry powerful but deceptive political voices. Yet more must be understood than just this critical sense itself. What is especially important is its prevalence and intensity, which have made it particularly influential in South Korea. In this chapter, however, I do not intend to offer a systematic and detailed explanation of how the critical sense of the news media became pervasive and active in South Korea. Rather, my intention is to give a basic understanding of this sense and its significance to readers who are not familiar with the political communication of South Korea. I thus provide a brief description of how the mainstream news media came to be regarded as powerful political forces and what has led the authority of these news media to dwindle. In doing so, I identify key sources that have contributed to making the critical view of the news media prevalent and intensive. I also introduce three major newspapers: the *Chosun Ilbo*, the *JoongAng Ilbo*, and the *Dong-A Ilbo*. These big three newspapers have been considered to play a crucial role in South Korean political communication.

In describing the decline of the mainstream news media's authority in South Korea, it is necessary to discuss the structural transformation in political communication that the Internet has brought about, because this transformation is a significant, though not a primary, source of the decline of the news media's authority. In my study, however, its importance is not limited to this fact. The structural transformation in political communication by the Internet is also important because it has played a key role in forming online political talk.

In this chapter, thus, I sketch how the rise of online political communication has contributed to the decline of the mainstream news media's authority in South Korea. In doing so,

I introduce a new type of audience that has emerged with the rise of the Internet. The Internet allows audience members to post their responses to original postings in the form of comments. I characterize these comment posters as an Internet-based immediate audience, which I call *networked immediate audience*. Even though this type of audience plays a significant role in shaping online political communication, few studies have been conducted. I therefore provide a more detailed explanation of networked immediate audience.

The sense of the mainstream news media as powerful political forces

In South Korea, like elsewhere in the modern world, mainstream news media have been central to political communication.⁸¹ This is not just because these news media have served as a main bridge between public matters and a national audience; this is also because the news media have had the capability to turn events, information, or opinions into noteworthy public matters: that is, news (see Schudson, 1995, 2003). As a consequence, they have been influential in gatekeeping information about contemporary affairs and public issues, setting public agendas, and defining public matters. This communicative power has led the mainstream news media to be pivotal, though not necessarily decisive, forces in shaping popular opinion.

After the authoritarian regime collapsed in 1987, the South Korean mainstream news media began to be increasingly regarded as powerful forces not merely in political communication but also in the process of making collective decisions on public matters. This sense of the news media's political power was emphatically expressed by political scientist Jang-Jip Choi, who is one of the most famous social scientists in South Korea. In his book about South Korean politics after democratization, he asserts that the press moves the nation's politics (2005/2002, p. 41). He continues by providing a more detailed description of the press' political roles:

The political agenda in Korea is set by the press, not initiated by political parties. It is also the press that determines policy issues and priorities. From the President to the members of the National Assembly, from cabinet ministers to political advisors to ranking bureaucrats, one could say, with little exaggeration, that their job everyday is to

⁸¹ The mainstream news media had dominated political communication until the Internet emerged as a central communication medium. Even though, with the rise of the Internet, the dominance of the mainstream news media in political communication has been weakened, these news media have still remained the most powerful forces in political communication.

adjust their role according to what is reported that day in the press. The most they do in terms of making any decisions is to make decisions based on the expectations of how the press would evaluate such decisions. The political function of the press is thus powerful in evaluating the performance of the government, political parties, and individual politicians and bureaucrats. The press also functions as a quasi-judiciary agent. Judgments on ethical and legal matters in the political arena are first made in the press. Self-corrective mechanisms within political parties or in the National Assembly come into play afterwards, as do any formal judicial processes, and usually only as a matter of formality; conclusions are already drawn before the investigation has started. (Choi, 2005/2002, p. 41)

Even though these arguments are based on observations of South Korean politics that Choi as a political scientist has made, he has not tried to demonstrate them in the book. His view of the news media's political power in South Korea, thus, needs to be further examined by systematic and empirical studies. But many South Korean citizens would not be surprised by the above description because it represents the sense that is widely shared in the country.

The sense of the mainstream news media as powerful political forces stemmed, in part, from the political change toward democracy, which brought electoral democracy and the liberty of the press back to South Korea.⁸² The comeback of electoral politics has led popular opinion to be a central factor of politics. Hence, political power came to rely, more heavily than before, on power to mold popular opinion and, accordingly, on communicative power to gatekeep information about contemporary affairs and public issues, to set public agendas, and to define public matters. In the authoritarian regime, this communicative power was under the control of the state mainly because the news media were almost completely integrated into the structure of state power. Through press liberalization, however, the state lost its hold on communicative power. Mainstream news media and professional journalists, as a result, became independent

⁸² It is necessary to note that the collapse of authoritarian rule in 1987 did not immediately produce full-blown procedural democracy—not to mention consolidated democracy—in South Korea. It was in the second half of the 1990s that competitive and fair election and the freedom of the press were almost fully established. After 1987, nonetheless, popular elections were appreciably competitive, and news media enjoyed considerable freedom. These features also characterized South Korean politics—called “a mixed, limited military-civilian democracy” by political scientist Gregory Henderson (1968)—in the mid- and late 1960s. Under this limited democracy, South Korea had appreciably competitive, though not fair, elections and politically critical, though not completely free, news media. The “mixed, limited military-civilian democracy” turned into fully established formal authoritarian regime in 1971. Before the limited democracy, the country had a short-lived democratic regime.

sources of communicative power. With the transition to democratization, thus, many South Korean citizens began to think that these news media and journalists had been transformed from the mouthpieces of political power into independent political forces.

What has led many South Korean citizens to view the mainstream news media as not just independent but also powerful political forces is the fact that these news media have appeared to direct the course of public events. For example, many candidates or nominees have failed to be elected or appointed to public office when the mainstream news media disapprove of them; scores of public office holders have resigned or been dismissed when these news media rebuke them; quite a few government policies have been modified or abandoned when the news media disagree with them; the news media's definitions of public matters have usually become the most influential ones; opinions that the news media favor and highlight have had impact on political decisions regarding public controversies. These kinds of experiences and cases have shaped the popular belief that the mainstream news media have exerted powerful influence on politics.

The mainstream news media, however, have not been the only forces to shape the course of public affairs in South Korea. Other elite groups—for example, politicians, government officials, and capitalists—have also played important roles in politics. In fact, the course of public events cannot be reduced to the power of the news media. Many South Korean citizens, nevertheless, have considered the news media to direct the course of public affairs. This is, in part, because the news media are, in Michael Schudson's phrase (2003, p. 19), "the visible tip of the iceberg" of forces to shape the course of public affairs. This is also because the mainstream news media have appeared to be crucial forces in disputes over controversial public matters. Hardly have any controversies become public issues without gaining attention from the news media. Their significance in public controversies, though, has been more distinct when they take sides. The news media have not always taken positions on public matters. However, when they take sides in public controversies, these controversies have usually proceeded in a manner favorable to the political or social groups with which they sided.

A controversy over the South Korean government's labor policy that took place in May and June 1993 is one of many cases that have bolstered the sense of the mainstream news media as crucial forces in public controversies. The second president after the break-down of the authoritarian regime, who was elected in December 1992, appointed then-legislator Rhee In-Je to the post of Labor Minister. After assuming the post in February 1993, lawyer-turned-politician

Rhee sought to overhaul the government's labor policies. The South Korean government under the authoritarian regime had been friendly to capitalists and hostile toward the labor movement (see Choi, 1989; Koo, 1993a, 2001; Lie, 1998). Even after the authoritarian regime collapsed, this pro-capitalist and anti-labor stance of the government did not change (see Koo, 1993a, 2001). The government's labor policies were so favorable to employers that some of these employer-friendly policies were in conflict with the Supreme Court's decisions. Labor Minister Rhee wanted to reform these employer-biased labor policies. In particular, he tried to revise the Labor Ministry's administration guidelines that were at odds with the rulings of the Court.

As a part of the project to reform these government guidelines, Rhee In-Je attempted to change the guideline—the so-called “no work, no pay principle”—that workers should not be paid during a strike. In South Korea, the collapse of the authoritarian regime was immediately followed by a rapid increase of labor strikes, which had been severely repressed by the authoritarian state. In responding to this labor struggle, South Korean capitalists began to argue for the “no work, no pay principle” and to campaign for this “principle.” In 1990, a national organization representing capitalists, Korea Employers Federation (KEF), enforced the principle, which was also endorsed by the government. But the workers did not agree with the principle. When capitalists refused to pay striking workers, the workers responded by going on strike again or by filing suits against them. Two cases concerning this wage issue were brought to the Supreme Court in 1992. In both cases, the court ruled that even though workers go on strike, employers have to pay the employees the part of their wages that accounts for living expenses such as the cost of board, transportation fees, and family allowances.⁸³ Based on these decisions by the Supreme Court, Rhee tried to change the existing government guideline and suggested that employers pay striking workers the partial wages that accounts for living expenses.

Rhee In-Je, officials at the Labor Ministry, and some specialists in labor relations argued that the newly suggested government guideline would not have significant impact on employers' labor costs. In their view, the partial wages that the new guideline asked employers to pay striking workers was no more than about 5–10 percent of their original wages. According to

⁸³ These rulings by the South Korea's Supreme Court depended on a legal theory in which wage consists of two different parts. One part is compensation that workers receive in exchange of their labor; the other is pay that workers receive due to their legal status as employees. In practice, employees receive a certain portion of their wages even when they are absent from their duties due to illness or family affairs. This pay can be interpreted as the result of the legal status of employee, rather than compensation for labor service. This legal theory of wages has been accepted by the Japanese court, but not by courts in Western countries.

them, furthermore, many South Korean employers had paid striking workers about 50–60 percent of the original wage—this money was offered under the name not of *wage* but of *inducement*—after labor disputes were settled.

Labor Minister Rhee's attempt to revise the guideline for the “no work, no pay principle,” nevertheless, sparked a backlash. After the Labor Ministry made the guideline change public on May 18, 1993, capitalists, through organizations like KEF representing their interests, announced critical statements and lobbied against this plan. The ministers of economic-related departments of the government and the leaders of the ruling party expressed worries over Rhee's reformative approach to the labor-management relations and tried to persuade Rhee to defer changing the guideline. In contrast, Rhee's attempt was welcomed by the members of the working class and by social movement activists. The main opposition party—although it was far from a party of the working class—also expressed support for revising the guideline.

This controversy over the guideline of the “no work, no pay principle”—in particular, the conflict between Rhee and opponents of changing the guideline such as capitalists, economic bureaucrats, and the leaders of the ruling party—immediately became a part of the news media's agenda in late May. In reporting this controversy, most mainstream news media were not critical of the guideline change although they were also faithful to conveying critical responses to it. These news media described Rhee's attempt as a reform to rectify an employer-biased labor policy that conflicts with the decision of the Supreme Court.

Through their editorials, however, about half of the national daily newspapers—including three major newspapers: the *Chosun Ilbo*, the *Dong-A Ilbo*, the *JoongAng Ilbo*—expressed critical views on changing the guideline. These newspapers admitted that the South Korean government needed to regain the trust of the workers by revising employer-friendly labor policies. They also basically agreed with the idea that if the government's guidelines are at odds with the decisions of the Supreme Court, those guidelines should be revised. The critical newspapers, nevertheless, did not agree with the idea that it was necessary to change the guideline. The papers asserted that the main goal of the Labor Ministry or labor policy should be to establish labor peace for economic growth. According to them, however, the guideline change could be detrimental to labor peace because it could encourage labor strikes. In this view, the *Chosun Ilbo* pointed out that the timing for changing the guideline was unfortunate because an annual negotiation between labor and management toward a new collective bargaining

agreement was underway at each company. From this perspective, the critical newspapers considered Rhee's plan of changing the guideline to be right in principle but radical and dangerous in practice. They thus asked Rhee In-Je to take a practical, rather than an idealistic, approach to labor policy. In addition, they requested that the Labor Ministry should be neutral between labor and management, probably because they thought changing the guideline suggested the Ministry's inclination toward the workers.

In contrast to these newspapers, the *Hankyoreh*—which has been regarded as a progressive or liberal newspaper—supported changing the guideline of the “no work, no pay principle” and criticized objectors to this guideline change. This paper was the only national daily newspaper that expressed support for the guideline change in its editorial section. The *Hankyoreh* considered the Supreme Court to have legal authority to provide the final interpretation of law. Based on this view, the newspaper claimed that in a society founded on the principle of the rule of law, it is beyond dispute that government guidelines conflicting with the Supreme Court's interpretation of law should be changed.

The news coverage of the controversy over the “no work, no pay principle” subsided in early June 1993. But the mainstream news media started to discuss this controversy again with renewed attention when labor unrest became a main item on the news media's agenda in mid-June. The news media began to focus on this issue of labor unrest when a labor dispute in Hyundai Precision & Industries Corporation (HPIC)—which was then a subsidiary of South Korean conglomerate Hyundai—intensified.⁸⁴

On June 5, 1993, the labor union leader of HPIC signed a new collective bargaining agreement without informing other union officials and members of his decision. Even after making this decision based on his authority as a union leader, the union leader did not try to explain his decision to the union officials and members; in fact, he vanished. The union officials and members, thus, suggested that the union leader might have been forced to sign the collective bargaining agreement by the managers. They also argued that the agreement between the union leader and the managers was not valid, and they asked the managers to open a new salary negotiation. But the managers refused the workers' request, and they insisted that the new agreement was legal based on the Supreme Court's preceding ruling that a union leader has the full and complete authority to sign a collective bargaining agreement. As a response to the union

⁸⁴ Hyundai Precision & Industries Corporation was renamed as Hyundai Mobis in 2000.

leader's arbitrary decision and the managers' refusal to start renegotiation, the workers of HPIC decided to go on strike. This strike was defined as illegal by the Labor Ministry as well as the managers of the company.

In mid-June, the labor dispute spread to other subsidiary companies of Hyundai. The labor unions of these companies either resolved to strike or began to discuss strike because they failed to reach new salary agreements with the managers. The managers of the Hyundai group suggested that these simultaneous labor disputes resulted from a labor struggle strategy of the labor organization—called *Hyun-Chong-Ryen* 현총련 in an abbreviated form—which is the federation of the labor unions of Hyundai's subsidiary companies. On the contrary, the officials of the labor unions criticized the managers for not taking the negotiations seriously.

The South Korean news media instantly began to report the labor strike at HPIC. In covering this event, many mainstream news media also drew attention to labor strikes that were taking place at other workplaces. When labor disputes began to spread to other subsidiary companies of Hyundai, labor unrest became a main part of these news media's agenda. They reported this issue as a main topic day after day and discussed it in their editorials. In reporting this issue, they emphasized the increase of labor strikes in June—some of these newspapers used the expression of “rapid increase” in the headlines of their reports—and highlighted the damage that the strikes would cause to the national economy. In their editorials, they expressed strong concern about this damage and asked labor and management to cooperate for the sake of the national economy.

When labor disputes became a major topic of news in mid-June, critics of Rhee In-Je's reformative approach to labor policy began to argue that Rhee's reform had contributed to the rise of the labor unrest. Korea Employers Federation (KEF) promoted this argument by providing reporters with the data that showed the increase of labor disputes in June. According to these data, the number of labor disputes that were reported to the Labor Ministry during the period of June 1 to June 15 increased from 147 in 1992 to 163 in 1993 (Choi, 1993). Some officials of KEF attributed this approximately 11 percent increase of labor disputes to the Labor Ministry's new labor policy.

Yet, the Labor Ministry refuted this argument. According to the Ministry, the slight increase of labor disputes in the first half of June resulted, in part, from the fact that labor and management started new salary negotiations later in 1993 than in 1992 (Choi, 1993). The

Ministry also pointed out that the number of labor disputes during the period between January 1 and June 15 decreased from 720 in 1992 to 380 in 1993.

In spite of the Labor Ministry's refutation of the argument that the new labor policies encouraged labor disputes, critics of Labor Minister Rhee continued to criticize and challenge his labor policies: in particular, his attempt to change the guideline of the "no work, no pay principle." On June 21, the managers of the Hyundai group announced that they would not pay striking workers wages. Many pro-capitalist legislators of the ruling party and the ministers of economic-related departments of the government pressed Rhee to defer changing the guideline. Rhee, nonetheless, did not give up his plan to change the guideline. He insisted that government policy could not be in conflict with the Supreme Court's interpretation of the law.

In this reignited controversy, most mainstream news media expressed unfavorable, if not hostile, views about Rhee and his reform in labor policy. All national daily newspapers except for the *Hankyoreh* and the *Seoul Shinmun* published editorials in which criticism was directed at Rhee and his labor policy.⁸⁵ This critical attitude is suggested in table 3-1, which gives translations of the headlines of the editorials about Rhee In-Je's labor policy published by South Korea's national daily newspapers in late June 1993.⁸⁶ This criticism of Rhee is based not only on the idea that the main goal of labor policy should be to establish labor peace, but also on the conjecture that Rhee's reform encouraged the labor unrest. These newspapers also revealed their negative views on Rhee through their editorial cartoons and columns.

Even in reporting the controversy over the "no work, no pay principle," the critical newspapers were unfriendly to Rhee and his reform. They highlighted two angles with regard to changing the guideline. The first is that the guideline change will be withdrawn. When Rhee and the leaders of the ruling party agreed to determine the guideline change after further discussion, these newspapers reported that the guideline change had been virtually withdrawn. Even after Rhee clarified that the guideline change was not withdrawn but under consultation, they still reported, based on sources outside the Labor Ministry, that the guideline change would be withdrawn. The second angle of the guideline change that the newspapers emphasized is that Rhee's reform caused confusion in labor policy, the government, or the relationship between labor and management. These two angles were stressed more through the editing and placement

⁸⁵ The *Seoul Shinmun* was then a state-owned newspaper.

⁸⁶ This table does not include the national daily newspapers that specialize in economic news.

of news stories about the controversy than by the content of these stories. When the controversy was reported on the front page of the newspapers, these news reports usually focused on one of the two angles. Even when news articles about the controversy were not centered on the angles, the headlines of the articles often highlighted them. But the newspapers did not completely ignore other angles of the controversy. Readers who scrutinized all news articles about the controversy could be exposed to other angles as well: for example, the necessity of the guideline change from the perspective of the principle of the rule of law, and the lack of the evidence to show that Rhee's labor policy encouraged the labor unrest. These angles, however, were marginalized in the newspapers that were critical of the guideline change.

The controversy over the guideline of the "no work, no pay principle" was virtually brought to an end on June 23, when Prime Minister Hwang In-Sung ordered all members of the Cabinet to stop discussing this guideline. The government left the guideline unchanged without giving a clear explanation about how it can be justified to maintain a guideline that conflicts with the Supreme Court's decision. Even though labor organizations and the main opposition party announced critical statements about this decision by the government, they seemed to be powerless to change it. Most mainstream news media reported these critical responses. In contrast to their reports about the criticism against Labor Minister Rhee's reform, however, these news media did not continue to highlight these critiques by labor organizations and the opposition party.

Labor Minister Rhee's attempt to change the guideline of the "no work, no pay principle" was eventually abandoned. This result might have stemmed primarily from South Korean capitalists' capability to mobilize politicians, government officials, and journalists, or from the power of pro-capitalist groups in the country. For many South Korean citizens, though, the case of the controversy over the guideline change was considered to show the political power not only of the capitalists or the pro-capitalist groups but also, specifically, of the mainstream news media. This view depended on two interrelated senses. The first is that public controversies had not always proceeded in a manner favorable to the capitalists, particularly when the news media had not supported them; the second is that the outcomes of public controversies had usually corresponded to the news media's stances on these controversies. The South Korean citizens, thus, thought that the guideline change had been withdrawn not merely because the capitalists had objected to Rhee's reform, but also because the mainstream news media had sided with them.

This controversy is one of numerous cases to make many South Korean citizens believe that the mainstream news media are crucial forces in public controversies.

This belief of the mainstream news media has been strengthened by the fact that, as exemplified by the case of the controversy over the “no work, no pay principle,” the news media have expressed their stances in a conspicuous, if not a blatant, way. When the news media take sides in public controversies, they have revealed their positions in an obvious and often offensive manner. Even in reporting these controversies—precisely in editing reports about the controversies—they have not hidden their positions. Hence, when the outcome of a public controversy corresponds to the mainstream news media’s stance on the controversy, many South Korean citizens are encouraged to ascribe the former to the latter.

The idea of the mainstream news media as significant forces in public controversies has bolstered the view that these news media are powerful political forces. This view, in addition, has been intensified by the belief—shared by many, if not all, South Korean citizens—that the news media are capable of making even unjustifiable stances the most powerful ones in public controversies. This belief has been formed by the sense that the news media have sometimes supported not just debatable but unjustifiable stances in public controversies and, as a result, have made the controversies proceed in a manner favorable to these unwarranted stances.

The controversy over the guideline of the “no work, no pay principle” was one of the cases that have led many South Korean citizens to gain this sense of the mainstream news media. In this controversy, Labor Minister Rhee attempted to change a guideline because it was in conflict with a decision of the Supreme Court. Rhee’s reform was based on the principle of the rule of law, in which the highest judiciary body is required to have the final legal authority to interpret and apply the law. In fact, South Korean critics of the labor movement—including capitalists, conservative politicians and bureaucrats, and most mainstream news media—have emphasized the importance of the rule of law, and they have frequently blamed labor unions and striking workers for not following the law and court decisions. In the aforementioned labor dispute at Hyundai Precision & Industries Corporation, the company’s managers insisted, based on the Supreme Court’s preceding decision, that the controversial collective bargaining agreement between them and the union leader was legally valid. Government officials and the news media basically agreed with this argument. As this case shows, the critics of labor movement have considered the Supreme Court’s decisions to be authoritative interpretations of

the law. For South Korean citizens who have regarded the rule of law as a fundamental principle of democracy, thus, it appeared to be indisputable to revise the guideline of the “no work, no pay principle.”

Most mainstream news media, however, sided with critics of the guideline change. These news media asserted that the primary goal of the Labor Ministry or labor policy should be to establish labor peace for economic development. They also speculated that the guideline change had encouraged labor unrest. From this perspective, the news media insisted that the guideline change should be withdrawn.

These claims, however, were open to question and doubt. Many people would not agree with the idea that labor peace should be the primary goal of the Labor Ministry or labor policy. A more dubious part of the mainstream news media’s arguments was the idea that the goal of labor peace can be superior to court decisions. In warranting this idea through their editorials, some national daily newspapers tried to play down the decisions of the Supreme Court. This court’s decisions, the newspapers argued, are no more than frameworks for the lower court’s decisions. In this view, they claimed that government policies and guidelines are not necessarily required to be bound by Supreme Court decisions. But this claim was unfounded from the perspective of the rule of law and, moreover, appeared to be contradictory to the fact that the newspapers had asked the workers to comply with the law and court decisions. In addition, the mainstream news media’s speculation that Labor Minister Rhee’s reform had promoted labor unrest did not rely, as shown above, on any evidence. More precisely, the news media did not provide any evidence for this conjecture.

For South Korean citizens who both took interest in the controversy over the guideline of the “no work, no pay principle” and regarded the rule of law as a fundamental principle of democracy, thus, not only the dissent to changing this guideline but also the news media’s justification for this dissent was unwarranted. In these citizens’ eyes, nevertheless, the mainstream news media led the guideline change to be abandoned. This controversy is one of many cases that have led many South Korean citizens to believe that the mainstream news media are capable of making even unjustifiable stances dominant ones in public controversies. For these citizens, therefore, the news media have appeared to be indeed powerful political forces.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ That citizens consider the news media to be powerful political forces does not necessarily mean that these news media are actually powerful in politics. The power of the news media tends to be considered stronger than their

In many South Korean citizens' view, central to the mainstream news media as powerful political forces are three major newspapers: the *Chosun Ilbo*, the *JoongAng Ilbo*, and the *Dong-A Ilbo*. These three papers are collectively called *Cho-Joong-Dong*, an acronym of their names, not just because they are the big three newspapers, but also because they share similar political orientations, which are considered "conservative" in South Korea.⁸⁸ For many South Korean citizens, the images of the three newspapers would be similar to Fox News that has been combined with the power of the *New York Times* in setting public agenda and defining public matters. They are believed to be the most powerful forces in South Korean politics. In fact, when they take the same stances on public controversies, the controversies, in many cases, have proceeded in a manner favorable to these stances. One of these cases is the controversy over the "no work, no pay principle," which was described above. In this controversy, *Cho-Joong-Dong* led criticism against Labor Minister Rhee and his reform in labor policy. In the remark introduced at the beginning of this section, political scientist Choi (2005/2002) has maintained that the press moves South Korean politics. In many South Korean citizens' view, this remark can be revised as follows: what moves politics in South Korea is *Cho-Joong-Dong* rather than the press.

The decline of the news media's authority as a public voice

After the collapse of the authoritarian regime in 1987, as described in the previous section, the power of South Korean mainstream news media has appeared to rise. This apparent rise of the news media's power, however, has not been accompanied with the increase of their authority as a public voice. During the period of authoritarian rule, pro-democracy citizens were critical of the news media mainly because the media were subordinate to the state. With the transition to democracy, the news media became increasingly independent of political power. Many citizens, nevertheless, have still considered the news media to fail to serve democracy. In these critical citizens' view, the news media provide distorted images of reality and biased views of public issues.

A large body of research about news has demonstrated that reporting is not to mirror realities but to construct realities by selecting, highlighting, and framing (see, among others,

actual degree of power (see Schudson, 2003). South Korean citizens' sense of the mainstream news media as powerful political forces, however, is not completely groundless.

⁸⁸ It is necessary to note that conservative political orientations in South Korea have been formed in the nation's unique context. These political orientations, thus, should be distinguished from conservatism in Western countries.

Entman, 1989; Gitlin, 1979; Lippmann, 1950/1922; Schudson, 2003). According to these studies, thus, the news media always convey constructed—in other words, biased—images of reality. Many scholars of American journalism, nonetheless, have agreed that intentional and obvious political bias is uncommon in the modern professional journalism of America (see Dennis, 1997; Schudson, 1995, 2003).

Yet, many South Korean citizens have considered intentional and politically motivated bias to frame news stories. This view has resulted, in part, from the fact that South Korean mainstream news media can be easily identified by their political orientations. In South Korean citizens' sense, the nation's mainstream newspapers are associated with particular political parties, even though, unlike the party press, these newspapers are not subordinate to these political parties.⁸⁹ What has bolstered the view of the news media as purveyors of political bias is not just the fact that the news media show distinguishable political slants, but also—more importantly—the sense that the news media have failed to hide their slants under the basic norms of professional journalism. In challenging the charge that the American news media convey a liberal political bias, communication and media scholar Everette E. Dennis (1997) has argued that norms of professional journalism constrain American journalists from injecting their personal political bias on the news. Similarly, South Korean citizens who are critical of the news media do not believe that South Korean journalists are free to inject their personal political bias on their news stories. Unlike Dennis' view of American journalists, however, these critical citizens consider South Korean journalists to be guided by news organizations' partisanship rather than by professionalism. In the critical citizens' sense, the news media often distort facts, apply double standards, voice purely partisan views, as well as screen their unfavorable facts and opinions.

Some people may argue that many South Korean citizens' critical sense of the news media as purveyors of political bias stems more from these critics' partisanship than from media bias itself. In fact, quite a few communication researchers and psychologists have argued that partisans tend to consider news coverage to be biased against their favorite political parties, candidates, or positions (Christen, Kannaovakun, & Gunther, 2002; Dalton, Beck, & Huckfelt,

⁸⁹ The association between newspapers and particular political parties, however, is not a unique phenomenon of South Korean political communication. This phenomenon, called "party-press parallelism" or "political parallelism," is also found in some Western European countries such as France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and the Netherlands (see Blumler & Gurevitch, 1975/1995; Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Seymour-Ure, 1974; von Kempen, 2007).

1998; Giner-Sorolla & Chaiken, 1994; Gunther, 1992; Lee, 2005; Perloff, 1989; Vallone, Ross, & Lepper, 1985). This psychological phenomenon is called “hostile media perception” or the “hostile media effect.” In these researchers’ view, media bias is in the eye of the beholder, rather than in media content.

The hostile media effect may have played an important role in producing the critical sense of the news media in South Korea. The nation’s politics are broadly divided into three political groups: conservative, liberal, and progressive groups. Political conflicts among these groups are often intense and hostile. The critical sense of the news media is more prevalent and stronger among supporters of liberal or progressive political groups than among supporters of a conservative political group. This is not surprising if one considers that most mainstream news media—including the big three newspapers—are considered conservative in South Korea. In this respect, however, many South Korean critics of the news media can be regarded as partisans. The hostile media effect, accordingly, can be presumed to be a significant factor in giving rise to the sense of the news media as purveyors of political bias.

South Korean citizens’ critical sense of the news media, however, cannot be reduced to the hostile media effect. The news media have often been obvious, aggressive, and even perverse in revealing their political slants through news stories. This is exemplified by the case of the controversy over the guideline of the “no work, no pay principle,” introduced in the previous section. In this case, most mainstream news media objected to changing the guideline. But these news media’s justifications for this objection not only were dubious but also appeared to be contradictory to what they had argued in other public controversies regarding labor issues. In reporting and commenting the controversy, furthermore, they highlighted the pro-capitalist view of the controversy and attacked Labor Minister Rhee In-Je and his reform in labor policy. In addition, their attacks of Rhee and his labor policy depended, in part, on their speculation rather than on evidence. For citizens who supported the rule of law or the guideline change in the controversy of the “no work, no pay principle,” thus, the mainstream news media that voiced opposition to the guideline change appeared to provide biased views of the controversy and also to be like the parties that were directly involved in the controversy. As this case suggests, the news media’s performance has contributed to forming the sense of the news media as purveyors of political bias.

Before the collapse of the authoritarian regime, many pro-democracy citizens thought that the lift of the state's control over the media would have led the news media to serve democracy. That is, these citizens believed that if journalists came to enjoy the freedom of the press, they would have served as watchdogs for democracy and providers of fair and balanced information. In this sense, the pro-democracy citizens did not completely lose their trust to the news media as democratic institutions. After the collapse of the authoritarian regime, however, many South Korean citizens began to think that the news media's failure to serve democracy have resulted not only from the lack of press freedom but also from the fact that journalists and media owners put their private interests and bias ahead of the norm of professional journalism. This critical sense of the news media has been intensified by the sense that they shape the course of public events. In South Korea, ironically, the authority of the news media has therefore declined with the rise of press freedom.

The Internet and the structural transformation of political communication:

Media criticism as daily life and the rise of networked immediate audience

The development of the Internet-based political communication broke down the dominance of the mainstream news media in political communication. These traditional news media no longer serve as the only bridges that connect public matters and a national audience, although they are still the most influential forces in political communication. The rise of online political communication has also contributed to the decline of the mainstream news media's authority as a public voice, primarily because this new communication has spurred critical discourses about the news media. Before the rise of the Internet, as described in the previous section, many South Korean citizens were critical of the mainstream news media. The Internet-based media criticism has increased the number of these critics, and it has intensified their critical sense of the news media. After the rise of online political communication, therefore, the authority of the mainstream news media has further dwindled with their power.

Before the emergence of the Internet, media criticism was a marginal part of political communication in South Korea—despite the fact that many citizens have been critical of the news media—mainly because most media critics could not deliver their criticism to a national audience. With the development of online political communication, however, media criticism has become an increasingly important part of political communication. This growth of media

criticism has resulted not only from the fact that the Internet enables media critics to reach large audiences but also from the fact that this new technology makes it easier to criticize the news media.

The Internet provides alternative sources of information and ideas about public matters, and it allows people to access such information and ideas without difficulty. The news media's stories, thus, are easily compared to different information and ideas and, as a result, scrutinized and criticized. In addition, since the Internet makes it easier to search for and access old news articles, media critics can effortlessly compare the news media's current stories to their old stories. This comparison often reveals contradictions or inconsistencies in the news media. News can be considered the "trash of time" in the sense that old news stories gain attention from few people except for journalism researchers and historians. This fate of news is symbolized by the fact that printed newspapers end up in the trash. The fleetingness of news stories, however, was abrogated by the rise of the Internet. This technology has turned the trash of time into a weapon of media criticism.

By providing continuous opportunities to reach large audiences and making it easier to criticize the news media's stories, the Internet has multiplied media critics. In the pre-Internet age, media criticism was usually conducted by media and journalism researchers, social movement activists for press reform, and journalists who report on journalism. The Internet has increased the number of these traditional forms of media critics, and, more importantly, it has also turned many critical audience members into media critics. Many ordinary citizens began to engage in concrete criticism of individual news stories beyond the general criticism of the news media. As a result, media criticism is conducted on a daily basis by a variety of media critics. With the rise of the Internet, thus, media criticism has become a daily event.

In online political communication, media criticism is conveyed to many ordinary citizens through alternative and participatory online news media, blogs, and web forums. But what makes media criticism exposed to a great number of citizens is a change in the form of news—more specifically, a change in the design that frames how to display individual news stories—that emerged with the rise of online news.⁹⁰ The online space in which news stories are currently displayed usually consists of two parts: a news story written by a journalist, and audience

⁹⁰ For the form of news and its history, see Barnhurst and Nerone (2001).

members' responses, which are called comments.⁹¹ Online news stories, thus, are provided together with audience response. In this design of news, audience members are exposed not just to the news media's stories but also to audience response, which usually includes critical response. The design to associate message and response, therefore, leads the audience of online news to be the audience of media criticism.

Before the rise of the Internet, media criticism was nothing more than media and journalism scholarship, social movement activity, or journalism about journalism. With the development of online political communication and the emergence of the message-response form of news, however, media criticism has become ordinary citizens' daily political activity in the sense that they not only engage in media criticism but also are exposed to media criticism on a daily basis. In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England, the emergence of newspaper transformed politics into a part of everyday life (Briggs & Burke, 2010; Habermas, 1989/1962; Harris, 1996; Sommerville, 1996). In a similar sense, the rise of the Internet has led media criticism to become an element of daily life.

With the entrance of media criticism into daily life, the critical sense of the news media has been reinforced on a daily basis. Media criticism as daily life has also multiplied citizens who are critical of the news media. More importantly, the spread and growth of media criticism have broken down the foundation of the journalistic voice's authority as a public voice.⁹²

In an influential notion of modern journalism, journalists resemble what French sociologist Luc Boltanski (1999) has called "pure spectators." When journalists describe certain social or political events in their news stories, they are considered completely independent of such events. Their reports are considered to represent the objective facts or truth of the events. Although they are mediators between events and audiences, their involvement with regard to the events or the relationship between the events and audience is ignored, leaving only events and public response to them. Their *raison d'être* can be considered to be like that of a spy – "to observe, listen and report" in Boltanski's words (p. 29). In this respect, one of the most important

⁹¹ In many Internet sites, audience members' comments are posted on a message page, in which a message is displayed. The comments in this page are located on the space below the message. In some Internet sites like the *New York Times*, audience members' comments are posted not on a message page but on a comment page, in which only comments are displayed. If, in these sites, readers want to read comments on a message, they need to go to the comment page from the message page by clicking one more time. In the design that allows comments to be posted on a message page, thus, comments can be exposed to a greater number of audience members than in the design that displays comments on a separate page.

⁹² See chapter 6 for a more detailed explanation of how journalistic voice is legitimized

characteristics of modern journalists is their ability to see without being seen. This invisibility of journalists is one of the main sources to make them considered neutral observers.

With the spread and growth of media criticism, the invisibility of journalists has collapsed because their mistakes, fallacies, hidden intentions, or interests are analyzed, criticized, and revealed in public. Media criticism provides citizens with resources for the critical reading of news stories, contributing to weakening the aura of the news media like the images of “the fourth state” and a “watchdog” for democracy. This change has increased the number of South Korean citizens who regard journalists as factional and fallible communicative actors, rather than as objective and neutral observers.

In South Korea, not only online news but also most online political messages are displayed in the spaces that are designed to associate message and response. This design, thus, has played a significant role in shaping online political communication—specifically, in forming online political talk—as well as in leading media criticism to enter daily life. In the pre-Internet age, audience responses to a message were usually presented in different time and space from those of the message. This temporal and spatial distance between message and audience response inhibited audience members from revealing their responses. The Internet, however, narrows the temporal and spatial distance in the sense that it allows audience members to show, in real time or within a reasonable length of time, their responses to an online message on the Internet sites where the message is posted. The introduction of the design of the message-response association, furthermore, makes it possible for audience responses to a message to be presented in the same communication space in which the message is displayed. In this design, therefore, the spatial distance between message and audience response disappears. In addition, the design of the message-response association not only combines message and audience response but also puts together audience members’ various responses. An audience member’s response to a message, as a result, is interconnected with the message and other members’ responses. Hence, the design of the message-response association, along with the rise of the Internet, has contributed to multiplying audience response, fostering interactions between a message poster and audience members, and activating interactions among audience members: in short, to initiating and nurturing online political talk.

The design of the message-response association has also played an important role in turning online political talk into critical or hostile communicative interactions. Before the rise of

the Internet, critical responses to political discourse were usually ignored unless the news media drew attention to them. This was, in a large part, due to the temporal and spatial distance between political discourse and critical response. Most critical responses did not reach political communicators. Even though some critical responses to a particular political discourse could reach the originator, contact usually took place after attention and emotion regarding the discourse had weakened or dissipated. Most political communicators, moreover, did not feel that they should respond to critical responses mainly because their audiences did not—more precisely, could not—pay attention to these critiques. In this sense, the temporal and spatial distance has served as a buffer that protects political discourse against the impact of criticism. With the rise of the design of the message-response association, however, message posters are exposed to critical responses not long after their messages are posted online. These responses, moreover, are visible to not only message posters but also their audience members. Message posters, thus, think that their audience members' opinions about their stories are influenced by such critical responses, and they also believe that they would be embarrassed if they do not respond to critical comments. These imaginations produce, in message posters' minds, psychological pressure to make them justify their stories against such critiques. This influence of the exposure to critical responses is not limited to message posters. Audience members' critical responses to an original message are often followed by other audience members' critical responses to the critical responses. These critical responses to critical responses have similar influences on posters of critical responses. In short, the design of the message-response association embeds criticism in political communication. This design, as a result, has bolstered critical or hostile communicative interactions such as discussion, debate, contention, or flaming.

What the Internet and the design of the message-response association have brought about is not just communicative interactions—which are often critical or contentious—among comment posters as well as between message posters and comment posters, but also a new type of audience whose members engage in such interactions: that is, comment posters. In the sense that they are present at the same communicative space and time with message posters, comment posters are similar to the immediate audience, which refers to spectators or listeners who attend a public speech. These two types of audience are also similar in terms of their communicative practices. Immediate audience members provide a speaker with immediate feedback while or right after the communicator makes a speech. They also exchange, with fellow audience

members, their immediate responses to the speech. Like immediate audience members, comment posters engage in two forms of interactions with a message poster and with fellow comment posters. Comment posters, thus, can be considered an online version of an immediate audience, which I call *networked immediate audience*.

In contemporary public communication, the role of the immediate audience has declined as the development of mass media and the commercialization of communication and culture have led to the rise of the mass audience in politics and culture (see Fairlie, 1984; Habermas, 1962/1989). But this type of audience has been considered a central part of active and participatory public communication. In Jürgen Habermas's explanation of the bourgeois public sphere, the immediate audiences in the coffee houses, the *salons*, academies, and the *Tischgesellschaften* played an important role in giving rise to critical-rational debate. In describing the French case, he has argued as follows:

There was scarcely a great writer in the eighteenth century who would not have first submitted his essential ideas for discussion in such discourse, in lectures before the academies and especially in the salons. The salon held the monopoly of first publication: a new work, even a musical one, had to legitimate itself first in this forum. (Habermas, 1962/1989, p. 34)

As this argument suggests, public communicators in the bourgeois public sphere engaged in communication interactions with their immediate audiences. These interactions led the cultural and political world to be embedded in critical-rational debate.

The importance of the immediate audience in active and participatory public communication is also revealed by the Lincoln-Douglas debates. In a column—published in the *New Republic*—that laments the decline of oratory in contemporary politics, British political commentator Henry Fairlie (1984) asserted, “Without an immediate audience, there can be no great oratory” (p. 16). As evidence for this claim, he argued that immediate audiences had played an important part in the Lincoln-Douglas debates.⁹³ In these debates, indeed, the immediate

⁹³ Historian Allen C. Guelzo (2008) has claimed that the Lincoln-Douglas debates, in the strictest sense, were not debates. They, according to him, were “sequences of speeches, with only the most meager nod in the direction of interaction between speakers” (p. 94). He has also argued that the goal of “sequential-speech debates” in the electoral politics of nineteenth-century America seemed “principally to be getting transcribed and reported in newspapers or published afterward as books” (p. 94). In this view, Guelzo has asserted, “Either way, debate was more often an affirmation of print, rather than a triumph of voice” (p. 94). In fact, the Lincoln-Douglas debates were stenographically reported in newspapers. From this perspective, some people may argue that immediate audiences were not important factors in the debates. Guelzo, however, has emphasized that “the debates were still speech

audiences were active and conspicuous (see Donald, 1995; Guelzo, 2008). In 1858, seven debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas “attracted crowds ranging between two thousands and twenty thousands” (Zarefski, 1986, p. 116). When the two politicians conducted the debates, their speeches were often interrupted by applause and shouts. After they finished their speeches, they received emotional and enthusiastic responses from their immediate audiences. In a Pulitzer Prize-winning biography of Lincoln, historian David H. Donald has illustrated the responses that the immediate audiences had shown in the opening debate at Ottawa, Illinois.

As Douglas left the stand, according to the partisan Illinois State Register, “nearly the entire crowd pressed around him, and the living mass, with shouts and hurrahs bore him, in their midst, to the hotel, the cheering and shouting being kept up incessantly.” Lincoln’s partisans were equally enthusiastic, and, in what proved to be an unfortunate effort to show approval, a dozen or so sturdy Republicans put him on their shoulders and, preceded by a band, carried him to the mayor’s house. (Donald, 1995, p. 217)

As this description shows, the immediate audiences and their responses were important components of the Lincoln-Douglas debates.

Immediate audiences make three contributions to public speeches. First, they help public speakers have sense of their audiences by providing the speakers with feedback. Based on responses from immediate audiences, public speakers can modify their tones and arguments. The enthusiastic responses or heckling by immediate audiences may also charge public speakers with energy, leading them to become more immersed in making speeches (Fairlie, 1984). Second, immediate audiences influence their members’ sense of public speeches. When people attend a public speech as immediate audience members, they can gain information about how the speech is received by other audience members. This information may lead them to get more emotionally involved with the speech. Lastly, immediate audiences can be megaphones for public speakers. These audience members are able to get speeches across to wider audiences by talking to their acquaintances about what they saw, heard, and felt in the speech. As these three contributions show, immediate audiences are not just audiences but co-producers of the public speeches

events” (p. 98). Newspapers, he has said, not only transcribed and published their speeches but also reported how they had made speeches. In his view, therefore, Lincoln and Douglas bore “more than enough pressure” “to perform as speakers as well as the authors of words bound for print” (p. 98-99).

together with public speakers. In this view, Henry Fairlie argued that in political oratory, an immediate audience “is as much an actor as the speaker” (1984, p. 16).

In online political communication, the networked immediate audience plays similar roles that immediate audience plays in offline political communication. As I implied in discussing how the design of message-response association has shaped online political communication, comment posters are central actors in online political talk. Online message posters are encouraged to post their messages by comments. These message posters are also pressured to legitimize their messages first to comment posters. In addition, they gain, through comments, a sense of how their audiences receive their messages. In short, online message posters’ communicative actions are framed and shaped by comment posters.

For online message posters—like professional journalists—who are oriented to the mass audience, however, comment posters can be regarded as nothing more than day-to-day blips. In fact, many professional public communicators do not respond to comments. Yet, even if online message posters do not care about comments, comment posters still play a significant role because, in online communication, the audience is exposed to comments as well as messages. Comment posters influence audience members’ understandings of online messages and provide a sense of how other audience members receive the messages. In this respect, comment posters are not just audience members who reveal their responses, but public communicators who co-produce communicative interactions together with online message posters.

The Internet and the design of message-response association have produced two crucial changes in South Korean political communication: the entrance of media criticism into daily life and the rise of the networked immediate audience. The former change has facilitated the decline of the news media’s authority as a public voice. The latter change has fostered online political talk and has contributed to turning this political talk into critical or contentious communicative interactions. More importantly, these two changes together have transformed political communication from the transmission of political messages from public communicators to the mass audience to production and exposure of interactions—which are often critical or contentious—between journalists and media critics, on the one hand, and between online message posters and comment posters, on the other hand.

Conclusion

In South Korea, mainstream news media have been regarded as especially powerful political forces because they have appeared to direct the course of public events. In particular, three major newspapers—the *Chosun Ilbo*, the *Joong-Ang Ilbo*, and the *Dong-A Ilbo*, which are collectively called *Cho-Joong-Dong*—have been believed to be central to this power of the news media. Yet, the South Korean news media have failed to build trust and authority with a large number of, though not all, citizens. Many citizens are very critical of the news media. In these critical citizens' sense, the news media are purveyors of political bias. This critical sense has been intensified by the belief that the news media dominate South Korean politics. The rise of the Internet has also contributed to increasing the number of the critics of the news media and to fostering their critical sense, mainly because this technological change has led media criticism to become an element of daily life. The critical sense of the news media has thus been prevalent and intense in South Korea.

Hence, it is no wonder that with the rise of the Internet, many South Korean citizens began to seek alternative sources of information and ideas about public matters. But these citizens' online communicative actions are not limited to seeking alternative information and ideas about public matters. Through the Internet, they also began to post their critiques of news stories and to reveal their feelings and opinions about public matters. This political communication was shortly turned into communicative interactions, such as conversation, discussion, debate, contention, and flaming, which have been boosted by the design of message-response association and, as a result, the rise of networked immediate audience. The rise of this online political talk, in turn, has motivated and encouraged more citizens—not only citizens who have similar political orientations but also citizens who have different political orientations—to engage in online political talk. In short, a new form of discursive politics began to take place outside news institutions. Unlike the news media-based traditional political communication, however, this Internet-based participatory political communication lacks power to shape the course of public affairs. With the rise of the Internet, therefore, South Korean political communication is divided into communicative power without authority and political communication without power.

In South Korea, as I described in the second section of this chapter, public controversies have usually proceeded in a manner favorable to positions with which mainstream news media

side. After the rise of the Internet, however, positions that fail to gain support from the mainstream news media sometimes become dominant in the Internet-based participatory political communication. These dominant positions, nevertheless, cannot have impact on political decisions because, unlike the news media-based traditional political communication, the new form of political communication lacks political power. Participants in this new political communication, thus, often take to the streets in order to influence political decisions. This is exemplified by the case of the beef demonstrations that I introduced at the outset of chapter 1. After the rise of the Internet, the clashes between the two forms of political communication and the consequent street demonstrations of online-talk participants have become a recurrent pattern in South Korea. As I mentioned in the first section of chapter 1, the collapse of the authoritarian regime led party and election politics to replace street and contentious politics. By bringing about the new participatory form of discursive politics, however, the rise of the Internet, ironically, has brought street and contentious politics back to South Korea.

As I showed in this chapter, the mainstream news media's power without authority and the rise of the Internet have played important roles in shaping and increasing online political talk in South Korea. This new type of communicative action, thus, may be described as a response to both the condition of political communication and the technological change. The new communicative action, however, has not just resulted from the combination of citizens' complaints about the news media and their new capabilities that the Internet provides. The rise of online political talk is also associated with the formation of new communication networks of citizens—in other words, the formation of new sociability—that is interconnected with the construction of a new political culture. Even though the critical sense of the news media and the technological characteristics of the Internet have played significant roles once again in shaping this new culture, the culture is not reduced to these two factors. In order to understand online political talk in South Korea, therefore, it is necessary to investigate this new culture. In subsequent chapters, therefore, I will explore the culture of online-talk participants as well as their communicative action.

Figures and Tables

Newspaper	Date	Headline of Editorial
The <i>Chosun Ilbo</i>	June 22	Why is the Labor Ministry sticking?
The <i>Chosun Ilbo</i>	June 23	The trial and error of some members of the Cabinet
The <i>Dong-A Ilbo</i>	June 20	Faltering labor policy
The <i>Dong-A Ilbo</i>	June 23	Questioning Labor Minister Rhee
The <i>Hankook Ilbo</i>	June 23	Minister Rhee's view of labor policy stands out excessively
The <i>Hankyoreh</i>	June 24	Overhaul in the labor administration becomes a target of attacks
The <i>Hankyoreh</i>	June 26	The reform and the conservative forces' reaction
The <i>JoongAng Ilbo</i>	June 22	The Labor policy that brings only confusion
The <i>Koomin Ilbo</i>	June 22	Confusion in countermeasures against labor disputes
The <i>Kyunghyang</i> ⁹⁴	June 23	Agitation produced by the new labor policy
The <i>Sekye Ilbo</i>	June 22	Clarify the new labor policy
The <i>Sekye Ilbo</i>	June 26	Confusion in labor policy shouldn't be allowed any more

[Table 3-1] Headlines of Editorials about the “no work, no pay principle”
that South Koreana mainstream newspapers published in June, 1993

⁹⁴ The full name of this newspaper is the *Kyunghyang Shinmun*.

Chapter 4

Citizen Polemism in South Korea:

The Internet and a New Social Role in Public Communication

The Internet has produced and multiplied new types of public communicators who convey stories about the public world. By public communicator I mean actors who communicate their experiences, feelings, information, and thoughts to a larger audience that consists of people beyond their personal networks, or to audiences gathering in a public place, which is open to a broad range of people. The development and diffusion of the Internet have digitalized news, leading to the rise of occupational journalists who produce online news (see Boczkowski, 2005; Deuze & Paulussen, 2002; Giussani, 1999; Pavlik, 2001; Singer, 1998, 2003). The combination of the Internet and personal technologies has freed professional public communicators from corporate news media, multiplying personal journalists and producing professional bloggers (see Froomkin, 2007; Gallagher, 2002; Gillmor, 2004; Robinson, 2006; Singer, 2005). In addition to these new occupational public communicators, the Internet has led ordinary citizens to become public communicators.⁹⁵

Citizen participation in public communication about public matters, actually, is not a new phenomenon; it existed before the rise of Internet. Citizens have expressed their collective opinions or complaints through voting, opinion surveys, social movements, or collective actions. Their expressions of collective opinions or complaints, however, have been restricted to special public issues. Even when they expressed their collective opinions or complaints, such expressions could reach a larger audience only through mainstream media, since the media has served as the only bridge between public messages and a larger audience. Most ordinary citizens, furthermore, have not had chances to express their individual thoughts on public issues in a

⁹⁵ Many citizens post their stories about private worlds as well as contemporary affairs, public issues, art, and entertainment. Even posters of stories about non-private worlds often write their personal stories online. The rise of the Internet, therefore, has multiplied private stories communicated in a public place. This is one of the important changes in public communication that the Internet has brought about. Quite a few communication and media researchers have explored these private story-tellers and their practices (see Dominick, 1999; Papacharissi, 2002a; 2002b; Walker, 2000). Herbert J. Gans (2007) has attempted to conceptualize the private story-telling and the exchange of personal information through the concept of everyday news, suggesting that journalism researchers need to extend their research into these phenomena. In this chapter, however, my focus is on citizen public communicators who post their stories about the public world online.

public place. Some citizens have had their voices heard in a public place through talk television or talk radio (see Crittenden, 1971; Gamson, 1999; Hofstetter, Donovan, & Klauber, 1994; Livingstone & Lunt, 1994; Lunt & Stenner, 2005; O'Sullivan, 2005; Ross, 2004; Tebbutt, 2006). Yet, the participants in talk television and radio could have only expressed their simple opinions or immediate feelings such as complaints, anger, preferences, or acclamation. Only a few citizens could have conveyed their individual thoughts through the "Letters to the Editor" sections of offline newspapers (see Buell, 1975; Grey & Brown, 1970; Hynds, 1991; Richardson & Franklin, 2004; Sigelman & Walkosz, 1992; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2001, 2002a, 2002b). Even these letters, however, have been filtered by newspaper editors. Most citizens, therefore, have remained occasional collective public communicators in the pre-Internet age.

The rise of Internet-based public communication has turned many citizens into individual public communicators. The Internet has provided citizens with a channel through which they can get their messages across to a larger audience. The Internet also has made it possible for citizens' messages "in the long tail" to reach their audiences (see Anderson, 2006 for the concept of the long tail). Citizens' voices, therefore, can easily find their audiences. More importantly, the Internet provides citizens with the opportunity to speak in a public place. While the Internet as a communication channel has provided *opportunities to reach a large audience* for those who have wanted to say something in a public place, blogs and websites based on open publishing have offered *opportunities to say something in front of a large audience* for those who have never intended to say anything in a public place. These opportunities have transformed quite a few citizens from spectators or audiences to public story-tellers.

These online citizen public communicators have been usually called bloggers or citizen journalists in communication and media studies. The diversity of the citizen public communicators, however, resists complete conceptualization by these two terms. The citizen communicators post their messages not only on blogs but also on open publishing-based sites such as web forums or online news sites. They also have different role-orientations or practices in participating in public communication (see Atton, 2009; Lasica, 2003). For example, some citizen public communicators are oriented to reporting events and incidents and telling their personal experiences with regard to contemporary affairs (see Allan, 2004; Kim & Hamilton, 2006; Platon & Deuze, 2003). Another type of online citizen public communicators is dedicated to commentary on political issues and affairs or news stories (see Al-saggaf, 2006; Burkeman,

2005; Coleman & White, 2008; Park, 2009; Smolkin, 2004; Tremayne, Zheng, Lee, & Jeong, 2006). Still another group of citizen public communicators engage in public communication as members of political or social movement groups (see Ayers, 1999; Marmura, 2008; Stein, 2009; Wall, 2007; Wojcieszak, 2009). Therefore, in order to understand the nature of the newly emerging citizen public communicators fully, it is necessary to identify and clarify different types of the citizen public communicators.

From this perspective, I aim to identify and characterize a particular type of citizen public communicators in South Korea—which I call *citizen polemicists*—that plays important roles in online political talk. I use *citizen polemicist* as a term to refer to citizen public communicators who form their own judgments on contemporary affairs and public issues, offer such judgments in a public place, and argue with fellow citizens about them. In this notion, the term *polemicist* does not carry a negative connotation, as it may in contemporary English parlance.⁹⁶ Rather, it is used as a neutral concept to refer to a specific type of public communicators, whose practices are centered on judgment, criticism, argument, refutation, and controversy. The South Korean citizen public communicators that I try to conceptualize by the term *citizen polemicist* may be considered the South Korean version of what has been called the political blogger in America and Britain. Indeed, they share many attributes and practices with political bloggers.⁹⁷ Unlike political bloggers, however, citizen polemicists include not only bloggers but also citizen public communicators who post their messages on web forums or online news sites. I furthermore want to capture and emphasize, by using the term *citizen polemicist*, that their communicative actions are centered on passing judgment on public matters and engaging in arguments with fellow citizens.

The rise of public communicators who I call *citizen polemicists* is widely recognized in South Korea. Their communicative practices are clearly identified by participants in online political talk. My informants use the terms “Internet *nongaegs*” or “*simin nongaegs*” when they express, in Korean, what I try to capture by *citizen polemicist*. *Simin* means “citizen” in Korean. *Nongaeg* 논객 has been used as a term to refer to public communicators—such as newspaper columnists or public intellectuals—who speak their thoughts on public matters to ordinary

⁹⁶ For a case of using *polemicist* as a negative term as opposed to participants in discussion, see Foucault & Rabinow (1984).

⁹⁷ For political bloggers, see Burkman (2005), Carlson (2007), Coleman & White (2008), Maratea (2008), Park (2009), Smolkin (2004), and Tremayne, Zheng, Lee, & Jeong (2006).

citizens. Not all public communicators called *Internet* or *simin nongaegs* in South Korea, however, are citizen polemicists. *Internet* or *simin nongaeg* is often used as a term to refer to a broad group of public communicators who post their own messages regarding the public world online. For example, some public communicators called *Internet* or *simin nongaegs* are no more than online or amateur versions of columnists and pundits, because they do not engage in arguments with fellow citizens. Quite a few citizen polemicists are reluctant to call themselves *nongaegs*, because they think *nongaeg* should be used as a term to refer to public intellectuals who make excellent arguments and engage in high-quality discussion. In short, the term *Internet* or *simin nongaeg* not only refers to public communicators that I try to capture with the term *citizen polemicists*, but also carries a meaning of other public communicators from which I try to distinguish citizen polemicists. I therefore use the term *citizen polemicist* not as an English term to refer to the Korean term *Internet* or *simin nongaeg*, but as an analytical term to capture and clarify the nature of the newly emerging specific type of public communicators that I investigate.

In exploring citizen polemicists, it is useful to apply the concept of social role that has been developed in role theory associated with symbolic interactionism.⁹⁸ Social role refers to patterned and characteristic actions framed by expectations, which are constructed by norms, beliefs, or preferences (see Biddle, 1986).⁹⁹ The concept of social role brings to our attention online-talk participants' expectations with regard to the actions of citizen polemicists. More importantly, the concept makes it possible to conceptually distinguish the social role of the citizen polemicist—which I call *citizen polemicism*—from the social position of the citizen polemicist. Social position designates a socially recognized category of actors (Stryker & Statham, 1985, p. 323). In this conceptual framework, the term *citizen polemicist* can have two different meanings. First, *citizen polemicist* refers to public communicators who actualize citizen polemicism. In this meaning, anyone can be called a citizen polemicist when she or he engages in citizen polemicism. In the second meaning, *citizen polemicist* is restricted to public communicators who are culturally attached to the position of citizen polemicist: more specifically, who identify themselves with citizen polemicists or are recognized as citizen polemicists by engaging in citizen polemicism repeatedly. These public communicators can be called *committed citizen polemicists*. The conceptual distinction between the social role and the

⁹⁸ For symbolic interactionism-based role theory, see Biddle (1986) and Stryker & Statham (1985).

⁹⁹ It is important to note that these cultural factors are shaped by material factors. In this sense, expectation is constructed by interactions between cultural and material factors.

social position of the citizen polemicist brings two different questions to the fore in studies of citizen polemicists. One is a question about identifying and characterizing the social role that citizen polemicists take; and the other concerns how and why citizen polemicists commit themselves to the social role of citizen polemicism.

The social role of citizen polemicism is explored in this chapter, while citizen polemicists' commitment to citizen polemicism will be investigated in the next chapter. In this chapter, therefore, citizen polemicist is used as a term to refer to its first meaning: people who perform the social role of citizen polemicism. The goals of this chapter are to illustrate the central actions of citizen polemicists, to clarify the nature of these actions, and to specify the contributions that the actions make to public communication.

The Dr. Hwang scandal and a citizen polemicist

Dr. Hwang Woo Suk, an ex-professor at Seoul National University, was a well-known animal cloning researcher in South Korea. On March 12, 2004, he and his colleagues published, in the US journal, *Science*, their paper on creating a human stem cell by cloning. After publishing this paper, he became one of the most famous stem cell researchers in the world. The US weekly magazine, *Time*, chose the Korean scientist as one of the “people who mattered 2004,” reporting in its Asian edition on December 27, 2004 that “Dr. Hwang has already proved that human cloning is no longer science fiction, but a fact of life.” In June 2005, he and his research team published, in *Science*, their second paper, in which they argued that they had increased their success rate by more than fourteen times.¹⁰⁰ These two research articles led Hwang to command a high degree of media attention. South Korean news media described him as a scientist who would bring national pride and economic wealth to the country.¹⁰¹ Due to the worldwide praise for Hwang's scientific accomplishment and the inflated description of him and his research by South Korean news media, he was considered a national hero.

PD Su-Cheop—which means “Producer's Note” in Korean—is an investigative television news magazine of *MBC*, one of the major national radio and television networks in

¹⁰⁰ While Hwang and his team argued in their first article that they had created one human stem cell by using 242 eggs, they claimed in their second article that they had used 185 eggs in creating eleven stem cells.

¹⁰¹ The news media play a key role in managing people's perception of and attitude toward genetics and biotechnology (Hansen, 2006). In South Korea, the news media reinforced the symbolic connection between Dr Hwang's animal cloning and stem cell research, on the one hand, and national pride and economic interest, on the other hand. This symbolic connection led many South Koreans to support Hwang's research (see J. Kim, 2009).

South Korea. On November 22, 2005, the television show reported that Dr. Hwang and his team had violated the ethical standards for research in acquiring egg cells. Even though the scientist admitted his responsibility for ethical conduct violation on November 24, many South Koreans continued to give support to him and strongly criticized *PD Su-Cheop*. Hwang's supporters staged a boycott of goods of the companies that had sponsored the show.

On November 25, three days after *PD Su-Cheop* aired its report about Dr. Hwang's ethical violation, a 37-year-old businessman of an information technology company—who uses “Multuksimsong” as his online nickname—posted a message about the Dr. Hwang scandal on *Seoprise*.¹⁰² At the beginning of this message titled “Another way of looking at the Dr. Hwang scandal”, he said:

As a result of reconstructing a story based on these and other sources that I have found and read, I discovered that the blame for this scandal lies somewhere else. I'd like to talk about it. Even though I am well aware that I might be branded a traitor if I say any negative things about Dr. Hwang, I'd like to do that.

In this message, Multuksimsong argued that the Dr. Hwang scandal resulted ultimately from the chronic bad practices of the academic world in South Korea, which takes for granted the violation of ethical standards for research. He said that Hwang should apologize for the fact that he did not stay away from such practices. He also emphasized that citizens should blame not MBC but the South Korean academic world.

South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun posted his unofficial message about the Dr. Hwang scandal on the Internet on November 27.¹⁰³ In this message, he asked Hwang's supporters to refrain from attacking *PD Su-Cheop* and MBC. His message, however, revealed a new fact: the television show had been investigating not only Hwang's violation of the ethical standards but also the fabrication of his research. The South Korean president expressed his complaint about the show's questioning Hwang's scientific accomplishment. The message changed the Dr. Hwang scandal from an ethical violation issue to a scientific misconduct issue. In contrast to Roh's intention, his message escalated Hwang's supporters' accusation of *PD Su-*

¹⁰² Multuksimsong began to post a message on *Seoprise* in early 2005. When the Dr. Hwang scandal occurred in November 2005, he was already a widely known message poster in the forum, because his messages had received active responses from the visitors to the forum.

¹⁰³ In South Korea, it is not surprising that politicians post their opinions on contemporary affairs and public issues online. Roh, moreover, had been known as one of the politicians who was most familiar with using a computer and the Internet, before he was elected as president in 2002. After being inaugurated as president, Roh had occasionally posted his unofficial messages online.

Cheop and MBC, because the supporters could not even imagine that Hwang's research was fabricated.

President Roh's message about the Dr. Hwang scandal also made many supporters of Roh much more critical of *PD Su-Cheop*. This was not surprising because the message showed that even though Roh objected to attacking the show, he was also critical of its report on Hwang. Since most members of *Seoprise* were supporters of Roh, his message intensified criticism of the show on the web forum. However, despite one of the central figures of *Nosamo*, a civil group of Roh's supporters, Multuksimsong did not agree with Roh's opinion on the show. The citizen communicator brought to the fore a different issue from Roh's message. He pointed out a problem in the advice given to President Roh by the Information, Science and Technology advisor, Park Ki-Young, based on Roh's description of the Dr. Hwang scandal in his message. Multuksimsong criticized Park—who was one of the co-authors of the second paper published in *Science* by Hwang's team—for her responses to the Dr. Hwang scandal as a presidential advisor. The next day, Multuksimsong posted four messages in which he tried to identify and review main issues regarding the Dr. Hwang scandal, “based on the facts that have been revealed so far and netizens' responses.” He presented four issues in those messages: the press, the national pride of Koreans, the academic world in South Korea, and bioethics.

Multuksimsong criticized, on November 29, a message about the Dr. Hwang scandal that another central member of *Seoprise*, who uses “Kein” as his nickname, posted on the forum. In his message, Kein denounced *PD Su-Cheop*'s critiques of Hwang. In criticizing this argument, Multuksimsong pointed out problems in Kein's understanding and interpretation of the facts about the scandal. The two citizen communicators exchanged five more messages until December 2. In these exchanges, they discussed issues about the description and explanation of the scandal, matters about the interpretation and evaluation of the scandal, and perspectives and values to interpret and evaluate the scandal.

On November 30, Multuksimsong, with only a bachelor's degree in physics, posted a message titled “What on earth are stem cells” on *Seoprise*. In this message, he explained five key points in understanding the Dr. Hwang scandal: what a stem cell refers to; how adult stem cells are different from embryonic stem cells; what Dr. Hwang accomplished in stem cell research; what another South Korean researcher, Dr. Park Se-pill, accomplished in his previous study about stem cells; and what social ethics are important in science and technology. He admitted

that his knowledge was not quite adequate to write this message. He explained why he wrote this message in spite of the lack of special knowledge about this topic:

I want to provide an easy and simple explanation of complicated and confusing terms that have been frequently mentioned these days. In doing so, I expect to make my thoughts clear.

In a message posted on December 3, Multuksimsong complained about the members of *Seoprise* who displayed immoderate criticism of *PD Su-Cheop* and delivered excessive defense of Hwang. On the same day, he posted another message in which he tried to refute one of the arguments presented by Hwang's supporters: the press cannot probe scientific research. The next day, in his message titled "Professor Hwang, you are not a scientist but a politician," he pointed out that Hwang dealt, politically rather than scientifically, with *PD Su-Cheop*'s suggestion of testing the stem cells that his research team claimed to have cloned in its papers.

The accusations against *PD Su-Cheop* were intensified when a South Korean cable television news channel, YTN, reported on December 4 that the show had used threatening tactics in gathering information from a former member of Dr. Hwang's research team. MBC apologized for violating the journalistic code of ethics and announced a temporary cancellation of the airing of the show, which planned to air its follow-up report about Hwang's research. In contrast to a heightened denunciation of *PD Su-Cheop*, the controversy led some young biological researchers to put Hwang's research under close scrutiny. On December 5, a message posted on *BRIC Sorimadang*—a web forum for young researchers in biology—revealed that Hwang's team had used duplicated stem cell photos in their second paper published in *Science*.

On December 5, Multuksimsong posted his message titled "I praise *PD Su-Cheop*'s patriotism." In this post, he criticized Dr. Hwang for using duplicated photos. On December 6, he introduced a New York Times' news article about duplicated photos in Hwang's paper. The businessman provided his summary of and commentary on the article. On December 7, he raised a question of why people are crazy about Hwang. In another message posted on the same day, he criticized South Korean progressive groups, long-time critics of Hwang's research, for objecting to stem cell research. In this message, Multuksimsong argued that even though he was critical of Hwang's scientific misconduct, he supported stem cell research. On December 8, he presented his prediction of how the Dr. Hwang scandal would evolve and his opinion on what issues should be discussed about the scandal.

Multuksimsong continued to post various forms of messages about the Dr. Hwang scandal for several months while the scandal remained one of the main controversies in South Korea. These forms of messages include critical evaluation, rational justification, satirical comment, analysis and review, simple complaint, logical refutation, emotional denunciation, experiential and observational report, personal prediction, and mere commentaries on news stories. Through these messages, he tried to convey his judgments on a number of issues with regard to the scandal.

From the very beginning of the Dr. Hwang scandal, Multuksimsong took a position on the scandal. Even though this position was one that might infuriate his fellow members of the web forum as well as many South Korean people, he was not afraid of expressing it online. In the process of forming and justifying his judgment on the scandal, he examined various opinions and information posted online, read Hwang's two articles published in *Science*, and searched for news articles related to the scandal in foreign newspapers as well as in South Korean newspapers. He compared, interpreted, and reconstructed information about the Dr. Hwang scandal that news articles provided. The citizen public communicator also attempted to identify main issues regarding the scandal and to critically evaluate other peoples' judgments. In the process of relating his judgment in public, he explained how he reached this judgment and why his judgment is reasonable. Multuksimsong provided his understanding and interpretation of the Dr. Hwang scandal, accounted for his judgments, and criticized the opinions that were critical of *PD Su-Cheop* and supportive of Hwang. In short, he tried to reach an informed judgment about the controversy, to share his judgment with fellow citizens by posting it online, and to persuade fellow citizens to agree with his judgment by justifying it and criticizing other judgments.

The Dr. Hwang scandal was not the only public matter on which Multuksimsong expressed his thoughts and judgments. Since he began to write his messages about the public world online in late 2003, he has posted his own thoughts and judgments on a number of contemporary affairs and public issues. For example, how can a participatory structure of a political party be constructed? What should we do in a coming election? What did a recent election outcome tell us? What is wrong with the statement that an opposition party's leader made on a previous day? Why do the poor vote for a political party that works for the rich? Should South Korea develop nuclear weapons? What is the problem with a social controversy

about a South Korean actress who posed nude for a series of provocative photographs?¹⁰⁴ In speaking about the public world, Multuksimsong's topics were not limited to public matters with which he was already familiar. Even when he was not familiar with a current affair or issue, as with the Dr. Hwang scandal, he tried to form and express his own judgment on the public matter by searching for information on the matter and making sense of it. In brief, Multuksimsong has offered his own judgments on a broad range of public matters online.

These judgments that Multuksimsong has posted online have four important features. First, his judgments are oriented to common agreement. He anticipates that they are understandable and agreeable to fellow citizens—who can be called strangers—beyond their personal networks. Hence, he tries to offer persuasive accounts of his judgments: more specifically, to explain why his judgments are reasonable or why his judgments are more persuasive than other judgments.

Second, central to Multuksimsong's judgments are the interpretive, moral, and practical dimensions of current affairs and issues, rather than technical and strategic dimensions of the public matters. For him, judging current affairs and issues is usually to take a stand in public controversies by distinguishing good and bad, telling right from wrong, or identifying what is more practical. In making these moral and practical judgments, a primary step is to interpret the meanings of public matters. A major part of Multuksimsong's messages, therefore, concerns interpretive, moral, and practical judgments of current affairs and issues.

The third feature of the judgments that Multuksimsong has offered in public is that they do not consist only of the final judgments that he makes on current affairs and issues after the natures and outcomes of the affairs and issues become clear. Even when public matters have been evolving, he has made tentative judgments on the public matters and posted those judgments online. These tentative judgments have been continuously updated, and sometimes changed, as he has been exposed to new information and views. For example, Multuksimsong posted online his first judgment on the Dr. Hwang scandal three days after the scandal started—when most experts and news media still hesitated to express their clear positions on this scandal. In fact, his first judgment on the scandal was not the earliest one posted on *Seoprise*. By the time he posted it, quite a few judgments on the issue had already been posted on the web forum. His

¹⁰⁴ In the photographs that were taken and directed by a Japanese magazine, the actress was depicted as a sex slave for Japanese soldiers during Japanese occupation of Korea. She was criticized by many South Koreans who have a national sentiment.

first judgment was his response to these early judgments. In his initial judgment on the Dr. Hwang scandal, Multuksimsong attributed the primary responsibility for the scandal to the chronic bad practices of the South Korean academic world. After he posted his initial judgment online, he continued to post his opinions on new information or sub-issues of the scandal that emerged as the scandal evolved. In this process, his judgment on the scandal was updated and changed. Multuksimsong later began to lay the blame on Hwang's immorality and the irrational patriotism of the Hwang supporters, rather than on the South Korean academic world. As this case shows, he is not reluctant to expressing his tentative judgments—open to change—in public.

Lastly, Multuksimsong's judgments are embedded in critical and contentious communication with fellow citizens. After he posts his judgments online, he engages in communicative interactions with his audience members by responding to their comments. He expresses thanks to amiable audience members' support and encouragement, answers skeptical audience members' questions, defends his thoughts and judgments against critical audience members' criticism, criticize and refute opposing audience members' opinions, as well as ridicule and affront hostile audience members' derision and insult. In particular, Multuksimsong's responses to comments posted by skeptical, critical, or opposing audience members have often led to discussions, debates, and contentions between him and his audience members. In this communication process, his judgments are criticized, challenged, defended, supported, revised, or refuted.

These features of Multuksimsong's judgments set his judgments apart from individual opinions as privately held judgments, which are mostly expressed as responses to survey questions, in informal and spontaneous talk settings, or through voting. The citizen public communicators' judgments are distinguished from privately held judgments by the fact that his judgments are oriented to public sharing. Unlike carriers of private opinions,¹⁰⁵ he tries to share his judgments with fellow citizens by offering them in public, explaining and justifying them, defending them against critical comments, and criticizing and refuting other judgments.

Multuksimsong embodies a new social role—which I call *citizen polemicism*—that has arisen with the appearance of the Internet in South Korea. A central part of citizen polemicism is

¹⁰⁵ Most private opinions are nothing more than expressions of individual preferences, which are formed mainly through the combination of two factors: the information to which individual citizens are exposed, and their predispositions such as attitude, interests, identities, or cognitive structures (see Price, 1992; Zaller, 1992).

to pass judgment on contemporary affairs and public issues in internet sites—such as blogs, web forums, and open publishing-based online news sites—and to justify such judgments to fellow citizens on grounds the citizens cannot reasonably reject. Citizen polemicists’ judgments, therefore, are expressed as persuasive arguments and oriented to public sharing. Another essential part of citizen polemicism is to engage in communicative interactions with fellow citizens by responding to their responses. As a result, citizen polemicists’ judgments are open to criticism, discussion, debate, and contention. In sum, citizen polemicism consists of communicative actions of passing judgment on public matters, making a case for such judgments, and arguing with fellow citizens about these judgments.

Passing judgment on contemporary affairs and public issues

Citizen polemicists provide various kinds of messages such as experience and observation, personal feelings and emotions, information and knowledge, explanation and interpretation, analysis and prospect, humor and satire, criticism and refutation, as well as mere commentaries. Their messages, however, are centered on their judgments on current events and issues. The term *nongaeg*—which is used to refer to public communicators who I call citizen polemicists—means originally, in Korean, “people who like or are good at discussing what is right and wrong in a public issue.” This Korean term implies the nature of citizen polemicists: judging public communicators.

This nature of citizen polemicists is demonstrated by their audience members’ sense of what they provide. In his interview, an employee of an insurance company in his late thirties defined *nongaegs* as people who provide clear and logical arguments about judgments on public issues (personal communication, November 10, 2007). He said that, when he had only vague feelings about a new public issue, *nongaegs* expressed similar feelings in clear and logical arguments. A full-time employee of a civic-movement organization for laborers in her early thirties said in her interview that, unlike most stories published in newspapers and magazines, messages posted online presented clear judgments (personal communication, September 4, 2007). In particular, she emphasized that *nongaegs* supply clear judgments about what is right and wrong. She said that news media only provide information and knowledge without telling right from wrong. In answering my question of what citizen polemicists provide, my informants usually contrasted, as these two interviewees’ statements show, the new public communicators’

messages with both news media stories and individuals' indistinct opinions. They said that citizen polemicists' messages provide persuasive accounts of clear judgments on public matters.

Regular readers of citizen polemicists' messages I met in my research said that when they were informed of a new public affair or issue through news media, they read citizen polemicists' messages. When I asked my informants why they read citizen polemicists' messages, they gave me similar answers, in which they emphasized that citizen polemicists' various and clear judgments on current affairs and issues help them judge such affairs and issues. An engineering professor in his early forties said in his interview that *nongaegs'* messages helped his indistinct opinions on public issues turn into clear and logical opinions (personal communication, July 26, 2005). A bank employee in his mid-thirties said in his interview that, after he made his own judgment on a new issue, he compared his judgments with judgments posted on *Seoprise* and *Moveon21* (personal communication, July 28, 2005). An owner of a small company in his mid-forties said in his interview that he gained confidence in his opinion on a public issue when he found *nongaegs'* judgments supporting his own opinion (personal communication, November 2, 2007). My informants' answers to the question about the utility of reading citizen polemicists' messages show their sense that various and clear judgments on current affairs or issues—to which they have not been exposed through news media—are provided by citizen polemicists. Their answers also reveal that, when they read citizen polemicists' messages, they expect the citizen communicators to provide clear and persuasive judgments on current affairs and issues.

The communicative action of judging public matters and offering such judgments in public is a crucial part of citizen polemicism. This action makes three significant contributions to public communication about public matters. First, their judgments, as my interviewees said, help individual citizens form their own judgments on current affairs and issues. Citizen polemicists supply information and knowledge on which their judgments rely. In judging public matters, accurate information and broad knowledge are important elements, but they are not sufficient for making such judgments. Judging current affairs and issues also requires interpreting their contexts and meanings, choosing desirable values and principles in evaluating or dealing with public matters, determining the relative importance of different aspects of the matters, judging the relation between what is desirable and what is realistically possible or acceptable, identifying the difference and commonality among similar matters, and evaluating different judgments on public matters (see Beiner, 1983; Beiner & Nedelsky, 2001; Calhoun & McGowan, 1997;

Steinberger, 1988). Hence, interpretation, value-judgment, imagination, conjecture, speculation, and supposition are inevitable elements in forming judgments on public matters (Arendt, 1953, 1977/1967, 1982; Larmore, 2001/1981; Oakeshott, 1991). These elements of judgment are marginalized in news media stories because the media is centered on furnishing information and knowledge rather than judgment. Unlike most journalists, citizen polemicists provide not only information and knowledge but also their thoughts about the interpretive, subjective, imaginative, and speculative aspects of judgment.

Second, citizen polemicists' judgments contribute to the rise of public discourses about the moral, practical, and interpretive dimensions of current affairs and issues. In modern society, public communication is centered on discourses that have to do not so much with ends and values as with means and interest (Arendt, 1958, 1977/1968; Habermas, 1974/1963, 1971/1968; Hallin, 1994; Purcell, Jr., 1973). In these discourses, public matters are reduced to technical problems or different individual interests and their conflict.¹⁰⁶ Citizen polemicists pass judgment not only on technical and strategic issues but also on such issues as what is morally and practically desirable, how public matters should be interpreted, what is right and wrong, what is good and bad, and who should be praised or blamed. The new public communicators, therefore, proliferate moral, practical, and interpretive discourses about public matters, contributing to bringing values and perspectives back in public communication.

The third important contribution of citizen polemicists' judgments to public communication is to initiate public criticism and debate. In judging current affairs and issues, it is necessary to interpret their meanings and to judge desirable values. These interpretations and value-judgments can differ according to the perspectives and social positions of political judges (see Arendt, 1977/1967, 1982). In fact, there usually exist multiple viewpoints and different positions with regard to particular public matters. In addition, since imagination, conjecture, supposition, and speculation are necessary elements in judging public matters, the validity of such judgments cannot be explained in a demonstrative way (see Arendt, 1953, 1982; D'entreves, 2000; Lamore, 2001/1981; Oakeshott, 1991). Judgments on public matters, thus, are

¹⁰⁶Habermas (1971/1968) has named the domination of technical and strategic discourse in modern politics the "scientization of politics." In this line of thinking, Daniel Hallin (1994) has characterized modern American journalism as the "scientization of journalism," which refers to the tendency to analyze and report current affairs and issues from technical and strategic perspectives (also see Carey, 1986). As a consequence, according to Habermas and Hallin, moral and practical discourses have declined in modern public communication.

inherently neither universal nor self-evident (see Arendt, 2004/1990; Walzer, 1981). Due to this obscure and partial nature of such judgments, their validity is assessed as a mode of whether they are more reasonable or more persuasive than other judgments, rather than a mode of whether they are true. In judging current affairs and issues, therefore, people are required not only to judge the public matters but also to evaluate other people's judgments on these public matters. In short, a communicative action of judging public matters and expressing such judgments in public includes a communicative action of judging and criticizing other judgments and offering such judgments and critiques in public.

Communicative actions of judging particular public matters and expressing such judgments in public are intrinsically connected not only to critical evaluations of other judgments but also to critical responses from the audience. Since judgments on public matters are neither self-evident nor universal, they are always criticizable and disputable. Communicative actions of judging public matters and relating such judgments in public, furthermore, cannot be separated from taking sides in public controversies. Even though communicators of judgments on public matters do not intend to take sides in public controversies, they are considered to end up taking sides through the outcome of their communicative actions. In short, when people judge public matters and offer such judgments in public, they situate themselves in the political world (see Arendt, 1977/1961, 1982; Beiner, 1983; McClure, 1997). Due to these features of judgments on public matters and communicative actions of sharing such judgments with fellow citizens, communicators of such judgments are always open to criticism and challenge. By submitting their judgments to the political world, they expose, on the one hand, the judgments to the test of other people and, on the other hand, provide *targets for criticism* to people who take different positions in public controversies (see Arendt, 1982). Communicative actions of offering judgments on public matters in public, therefore, provoke critical audiences to engage in critical communication with respect to these judgments. In this sense, a communicative action of judging a public matter and relating such a judgment in public is “an invitation to engagement rather than an appeal to truth” in political philosopher Kirstie McClure's phrase (1997, p. 76).

Since communicative actions of judging public matters and expressing such judgments in public are inherently connected both to criticizing other judgments and to drawing critical responses, these communicative actions are likely to initiate public debate. Citizen polemicists' messages, moreover, are arguable as well as criticizable and disputable because they present their

judgments as persuasive arguments oriented to common agreement. Their messages, thus, trigger not only disputes and controversies but also arguments. In fact, many online political discussions, debates, and clashes are ignited by citizen polemicists' messages. When Multuksimsong posted his judgments on the Dr. Hwang scandal on *Seoprise*, his messages usually initiated conversation, debate, and emotional disputes about the Dr. Hwang scandal. In sum, citizen polemicists' communicative actions of sharing their judgments on public matters contribute to opening up a space of critical and contentious communicative interactions about public matters.

Giving interpretations of contemporary affairs and public issues

Interpreting current affairs and issues is indispensable to making judgments on such public matters. As Multuksimsong's messages about the Dr. Hwang scandal show, the action of interpreting current public matters and offering such interpretation in public is one of central parts of citizen polemicism. Many regular readers of citizen polemicists' messages whom I met in my research emphasized that citizen polemicists' messages provided various interpretations of current affairs and issues. The regular readers said that it is difficult to make sense of public matters through reading news stories, because the stories usually provide information without sufficient explanation and interpretation. Citizen polemicists' messages, they argued, help them comprehend public matters and understand the meaning of the information that news media provide. When I asked, in an interview, what were the benefits of reading citizen polemicists' messages, a pharmacist in her mid-forties said that citizen polemicists' messages are like interesting novels (personal communication, December 14, 2006). She added that, while newspapers provide information, citizen polemicists present "drama" based on that information. A mid-ranking employee of a multinational technology corporation in her early forties emphasized in her interview that she was exposed to various interpretations of facts through reading citizen polemicists' messages, while she had been exposed, in the past, only to the facts provided by news stories and journalists' definitions of the facts (personal communication, September 2, 2006). As these descriptions imply, citizen polemicists proliferate stories about the understanding and interpretation of current affairs and issues.

Since the news media is, for citizen polemicists, the primary source of information and interpretation about current affairs and issues, citizen polemicists usually start their

communicative practice with checking information provided by news stories and critically examining journalists' interpretations. It is not surprising, therefore, that media criticism is an important component of citizen polemicism. In many cases, citizen polemicists present their interpretations of public matters in the form of critiques of news stories. In these critiques, citizen polemicists point out factual errors or distortions in news stories, reveal contradictory explanations and evaluations among different news stories, and discuss news stories' dubious perspectives and assumptions in interpreting current affairs and issues.

This media criticism by citizen polemicists is exemplified by one of the messages that a mid-ranking police official in his late thirties, who uses Juklimnupil as his online name, posted on *Seoprise*. He was one of the most unexpected members of *Seoprise*, which is designed for discussion and debate of public issues among people who oppose a conservative political group. In South Korea, police carry an image of a cat's paw for a conservative and authoritarian political power because they worked for repressing democratization movements under the authoritarian regime. Quite a few members of *Seoprise*, furthermore, have experiences of participating in political demonstrations and clashing with police. For political demonstrators, the police are considered representatives of an unjust power against which they protest. Many members of the forum, therefore, have a negative image of the police.

Quite a few members of *Seoprise*, nevertheless, have regarded Juklimnupil as one of the most exemplary citizen polemicists. Their favorable opinion of the police official does not stem from the fact that his online messages dealt with popular issues or took popular stands for the members of the forum. On the contrary, he usually wrote about the public issues that were least likely to be popular on *Seoprise*. The citizen polemicist's messages dealt mainly with issues related to the police, which were not central topics on *Seoprise*. Positive evaluators of Juklimnupil on the forum speak highly of him because he presented persuasive and logical thoughts and judgments on public issues and showed rational responses to comments on his messages. He was an atypical citizen polemicist, but his communicative practices, in many *Seoprise* members' view, embodied the ideal model of citizen polemicism.

On September 27, 2005, Juklimnupil posted, on *Seoprise*, a message titled "Even though being criticized when being criticized, let us know why we are criticized." The significance of the message is less in its topic or quality than in the way it deals with the topic. The online message begins with a short introduction and summary of how the South Korean news media

reported a small event—a public hearing on a revision to the Criminal Procedure Code that Lee In-ki, a National Assembly member of the opposition Grand National Party, held at the National Assembly Members’ Office Building on September 14, 2005. Had hundreds of police officers not attended the hearing, this public hearing would not have received media attention.

In this public hearing, Representative Lee presented a draft of the Criminal Procedure Code amendment, which would allow police to have an independent investigative authority. One of the central issues in the legal revision is how to share an investigative authority between the police and the public prosecutor. In South Korea, the public prosecutor exercises almost complete control on investigation and prosecution, even though the police conducts a major part of actual criminal investigation. In investigating crimes, therefore, the police have to be directed and supervised by the prosecution. Some legal scholars of the Criminal Procedure Code have argued that the prosecution’s monopoly of an investigative and prosecutive authority impairs the principle of checks and balances between powers. A large number of police also have called for a legal reform of an investigative authority. This issue, therefore, produced a controversy between the police and the prosecution.

In reporting the public hearing, what the South Korean news media brought to the fore was hundreds of police officers’ attendance at the hearing. The news media described that the police took collective action. They criticized that police, who are supposed to prevent an assembly, held an assembly. These reports led the minister of Government Affairs and Home Affairs to announce that if police officers were to take such a collective action again, he would punish them.

In his message, Juklimnupil attempted to show the problems of these critical responses to police officers’ collective participation in the public hearing. After a short introduction of critical responses to the event, he said: “These responses seem to be based on the assumption that police officers’ collective action is bad. Let’s examine whether such an assumption is right.” He identified two arguments of why police officers’ collective action is bad, arguing that they are groundless. The first argument, which Juklimnupil dedicated a major part of his message to examining, is that collective action of police is illegal. He introduced the constitutional provisions of the freedom of expression, which includes the freedom of assembly. He clarified the constitutional provisions and legal codes about the conditions under which the freedom of expression can be legally restricted. Based on such analysis, Juklimnupil summarized the legal

conditions that make collective action of police unlawful. He argued that police officers' collective attendance of a public hearing does not violate any legal codes. The second argument that Juklimnupil critically examined in his message is that any types of collective action by police officers, even though not illegal, should be prohibited. This argument, according to him, hinges on the idea that collective action of police officers might be easily transformed into violent collective action because they may carry weapons. Juklimnupil emphasized that this fear was groundless. He argued that police officers' violent collective action with weapons can be prohibited and punished under current legal codes.

In this message, Juklimnupil challenged the South Korean news media reports of the event. He tried to reveal and criticize the assumptions of the reports that frame how to understand and judge the event. That is, he talked about an untold dimension of news stories. Modern journalism has been considered to provide disconnected information about current affairs and issues rather than deep explanations and various interpretations (see Bellow, 1994; Carey, 1986; Entman, 1989; Park, 1940). This, however, is not to say that modern journalism only records a factual aspect of events. Modern journalism makes world events comprehensive in a certain way by structuring them into coherent narratives (Carey, 1986; Hallin, 1986; Romano, 1986; Schudson, 1995). In this process, journalists use various framing strategies and narrative devices; they also rely on certain presumptions, conjectures, beliefs, or ideologies. This dimension of journalistic stories—which has been captured in communication and media studies through the concepts of frame effects or an ideological role (see, among others, Entman, 1991; Hall, 1982)—exists, under the stories or between their lines, as the assumptions that journalists make about world events; it takes effect as the collaboration between journalists' assumptions and audiences' minds. Juklimnupil's message made visible the dimension of journalistic stories that was invisible to audiences. The message, therefore, led audiences to see this dimension critically. By doing so, he provided an alternative interpretation and definition of the event, an interpretation and definition to which people would have not been exposed if they had tried to understand the event only through news stories.

Citizen polemicists provide various interpretations on current affairs and issues. As Multuksimsong's case demonstrates, citizen polemicists' interpretations link otherwise disconnected information that news stories provide, form a coherent story, and convey the sense and significance of current affairs and issues. In doing so, citizen polemicists, as Juklimnupil's

case shows, criticize and challenge news stories. They reveal problems and assumptions of news stories and present alternative definitions of current public matters.

Most researchers of public opinion and democracy have argued that democracy requires informed opinions of citizens. In exploring these opinions, many researchers have focused on factual knowledge (see, among others, Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1989). Quite a few scholars, however, have emphasized that informed opinions need not only factual knowledge but also coherent and comprehensive understanding for making sense of an abundance of information and various perspectives for shaping adequate political tastes and preferences (see Arendt, 1953; Carey, 1986, 1995; Entman, 1989; Schudson, 1995). James Carey (1986) contended:¹⁰⁷

We need not only to know but to understand, not only to grasp but to take an attitude toward the events and personalities that pass before us. But to have an understanding or an attitude depends upon depth in the news story. (p. 150)

By presenting their interpretations of information provided by news stories and revealing assumptions and perspectives behind interpretations offered by news media, citizen polemicists supply this depth to public stories about current affairs and issues.

In addition, citizen polemicists' media criticism helps citizens recognize the fact that news media present coherent but partial and biased narratives of the world, rather than serving as a mirror of fact or a provider of truth. My informants said that citizen polemicists' messages led them to realize that news media provide distorted images of the world. This media criticism, therefore, contributes to producing the decline of the authority of news media as providers of the interpretation and definition of current affairs and issues.

Arguing with fellow citizens

In the pre-Internet age, judgments on current affairs and issues have been provided mainly by commentariats—called columnists (Duff, 2008; McNair, 2008; Silverster, 1997), opinion journalists (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007), or political pundits (Nimmo & Combs, 1992)—and occasionally by public intellectuals (see Brouwer & Squires, 2003; Etzioni, 2006; Jacoby,

¹⁰⁷In a similar view, Michael Schudson (1995) has claimed: "There is a difference between the 'informational citizen,' saturated with bits and bytes of information, and the informed citizen, the person who has not only information but a point of view and preferences with which to make sense of it (p. 27)."

1987).¹⁰⁸ Citizen polemicists, thus, may be considered online versions of these commentariats or public intellectuals. Unlike these traditional public communicators, however, citizen polemicists not only speak to their fellow citizens but also engage in communicative interactions with them. These communicative interactions with citizens separate citizen polemicists from commentariats and public intellectuals.

Citizen polemicists are considered to have to react to audience response. Multuksimsong and Juklimnupil each asserted in their interviews that it was wrong if citizen polemicists do not respond to comment posters (personal communications, November 7, 2007, for Multuksimsong; January 4, 2006, for Juklimnupil). These two citizen polemicists added that they made every effort to respond to comments on their messages. They regard interactions with audiences as something they should do. This sense was clearly expressed in the message that Multuksimsong posted on *Seoprise*.

As [Internet] networks have penetrated into our society, a new age has come. In this age, anyone can write, in a sense more easily than speaking. Among people who post their messages on a big [Internet] site that numerous people visit, some begin to get the support of many people. These writers seem to be called *nongaegs*. Their value seems to be considered to depend on how many people agree with them. But, if one sees how ... people have evolved into *nongaegs* through posting their messages and getting into debate with their readers by comments, the essence of an Internet *nongaeg* should be considered to be “interaction.” If *nongaegs* do not respond to comments on their messages, no matter how good messages they post, how are they different from unknown citizen 1, [citizen] 2, and [citizen] 3, who publish their opinions in Letters to the Editor...? If Internet *nongaegs* are people who don’t respond, [they should] give it up right now. (Multuksimsong, June 28, 2006)

In this message, Multuksimsong contended that communicative interaction with audience members is an essential element of citizen polemicism. This view is widely shared by the citizen polemicists I met in my research.

In particular, my informants emphasized that citizen polemicists had to address critical responses: more specifically, to defend their judgments against critical comments. A housewife in

¹⁰⁸ Public intellectuals are distinguished from academic scholars by the fact that they take a stand in public controversies and speak their judgments and arguments to ordinary citizens (see Blake & Phelps, 1994; Brouwer & Squires, 2003; Etzioni, 2006; Jacoby, 1987).

her late forties, who has used her real name Kim Kyungsook as her online name and has been considered a central citizen polemicist in *Digital Kookhae* and *Polizen*, argued in her message posted on *Polizen*:

The responsibility of *nongaegs* who post their messages on online sites with interactivity is that they have to respond to rational critiques to their messages. If they do not respond to rational critiques and questions, I think it shows that they consider their own messages to be garbage. As long as I do not need to get certain information from their messages, I do not read them. (2006)

This remark shows that responding to critical responses is considered an essential element of a citizen polemicist's practice.

This nature of citizen polemicism is also revealed by audience's sense of what citizen polemicists have to do. Quite a few readers of citizen polemicists' messages said in their interviews and offline conversations that they sometimes felt like posting their thoughts and judgments online. But they have not done so, even though they have been free to do so. In answering my question of what makes them hesitate to post messages of their own, they emphasized not only the difficulty in expressing their thoughts and judgments in a written form and the fear of being criticized, but also the burden of responding to criticism. These non-posters believe that if they post their thoughts and judgments on public matters online, they have to defend their arguments against critical comments. This, they said, requires them to expend a large amount of mental effort and a considerable amount of time. In short, the non-posters regard responding to criticism as a necessary component of citizen polemicism.¹⁰⁹

In the sense that citizen polemicism embraces an action of engaging in two-way communication about public matters with fellow citizens, citizen polemicists may be considered political opinion leaders in the Internet age. The political influence of citizen public communicators who are called opinion leaders, however, has been argued to be confined to their personal contacts such as family members, friends, and acquaintances (see Berelson, Lazarsfeld,

¹⁰⁹ With the rise of the Internet, traditional public communicators—in particular, professional journalists—have been encouraged to have conversations with their audiences (see, among others, Giussani, 1999; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007). In fact, some professional journalists have engaged in communication with their audiences (see Gillmore, 2004). For these journalists, however, an interaction with their audiences is nothing more than “after-sale service” or a new source of information. In contrast, for citizen polemicists, an interaction with audiences is the essential element of their public communication; that is, it is not icing on the cake but the cake itself.

& McPhee, 1954; Katz & Lazarsfeld, 2005/1955; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Hazel, 1968/1944). Opinion leaders do not intend to present their ideas to strangers or to get into arguments with fellow citizens who have different opinions (see Habermas, 1989/1962). Unlike opinion leaders, citizen polemicists are supposed to talk to strangers; moreover, they are required to engage in critical communication with strangers who may have different opinions.

Citizen polemicists' actions of responding to audience response boost their audiences' engagement in communicative interaction with them. These actions lead the audiences to have an expectation that their comments would be responded to by citizen polemicists. This expectation encourages citizen polemicists' audiences to post their comments. In addition, when citizen polemicists respond to their audiences' comments, these comment posters are stimulated to re-respond to citizen polemicists' responses. Citizen polemicists' actions of responding to audience response, therefore, invigorate their communicative interactions with their audiences: not only conversations with audiences who have similar interests or opinions, but also debates with audiences who have different viewpoints and judgments. In short, while citizen polemicists initiate criticism and debate by offering their judgments on public matters in public, they vitalize criticism and debate by responding to audience response.

Citizen polemicists' communicative actions of expressing their judgments on public matters in public and responding to audience response not only energize communicative interactions between citizen polemicists and their audiences, but also bring together people who are interested in these public matters and have different viewpoints and judgments about them. When Multuksimsong posted his thoughts and judgments about the Dr. Hwang scandal on *Seoprise*, his messages drew criticism and challenge by critical readers. In responding to these responses, he tried to persuade his critical audiences by defending his judgment against criticism and refuting opposite judgments. These actions led to discussions, debates, and contentions between Multuksimsong and his audience. His messages also received support from quite a few visitors to *Seoprise*, who agreed with his judgments on the scandal. The citizen polemicist's supporters sometimes responded critically, on his behalf, to critical comments on his messages. His critics also criticized and challenged, at times, comments supporting him. Multuksimsong's messages, therefore, led not only to debates and contentions between him and his critics but also to the debates and clashes between his supporters and his critics. Some members of his audience expressed their support not to his judgments on the scandal but to his actions of posting his

judgments on the issue online because they believed that his messages had contributed to active discussions and debates about the scandal. In sum, Multuksimsong's communicative actions with regard to the Dr. Hwang scandal called together not only those who were undecided but also critics and supporters of Hwang, ignited and intensified their critical and argumentative interactions, and framed those interactions. As Multuksimsong's case shows, citizen polemicists' communicative actions of relating judgments on public matters in public and responding to critical comments contribute not only to opening up a space of critical and contentious communicative interactions about public matters, but also to animating this communication space.

The decline of political discussion has been considered one of the main problems of contemporary political communication. This problem is believed to result, in part, from the disconnection between public communicators and their audiences. In Jürgen Habermas's view, the breakdown of critical communication between public communicators and their audiences contributed to the collapse of the bourgeois public sphere (also see Eagleton, 1996/1984; Hohendahl, 1982). He has described this breakdown as follows:

The public is split apart into minorities of specialists who put their reason to use nonpublicly and the great mass of consumers whose receptiveness is public but uncritical. Consequently, it completely lacks the form of communication specific to a public. (p. 175)

In this remark, Habermas has argued that the bourgeois public is divided into professional public communicators and the mass audience. Quite a few journalism scholars have also pointed out that a main problem of modern journalism is its disconnection from citizens and, as a consequence, its failure to open up political conversation among citizens (see Carey, 1995; Glasser, 1999; Hallin, 1994; Rosen, 1999). These journalism scholars have presented a new model of journalism called *public journalism*, in which a main role of journalists is to help citizens continue to engage in conversation about public matters with each other. In arguing for this new model of journalism, Daniel Hallin (1994) has emphasized that journalists should be participants of public discussion about public matters: "rejoin civil society and start talking to their readers and views as one citizen to another, rather than experts claiming to be above politics" (p. 176).

Citizen polemicists play the role that public journalism scholars have asked journalists to

take up. These new communicators contribute to provoking and invigorating critical and contentious communicative interactions among citizens by participating in public discussion: more specifically, by judging public matters, expressing such judgments in public, and arguing with fellow citizens. As a consequence, their audience members are connected with public communicators—specifically, citizen polemicists—and transformed from the members of the mass audience to public communicators.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have identified a new social role—which I call *citizen polemicism*—that has emerged with the rise of online political talk in South Korea. Citizen polemicism refers to the communicative action of judging public matters and persuading fellow citizens to agree with such judgments by offering them in public and arguing with the citizens.

Inherent in these communicative actions are criticism, disputation, refutation, and controversy. Actions of passing judgment on public matters in public comprise actions of critically evaluating other interpretations of and judgments on the public matters and offering such critiques of and judgments on those interpretations and judgments in public. When judgments on public matters are presented in public, they are also exposed to criticism, disputation, and refutation. Actions of responding to these critical and contentious responses by defending one's own judgments and refuting different judgments lead to debate, contention, and controversy. The communicative actions of judging public matters, expressing such judgments in public, and arguing with fellow citizens about these judgments are thus polemical by nature.

The term *nongaeg* is sometimes translated to “polemicist” in English (for example, Chang, 2005), because the Korean term connotes “to discuss” or “to be critical.” The term, however, does not necessarily mean “polemicist” in Korean. The English word “polemicist,” nevertheless, is a proper term to express the public communicators that I have attempted to characterize, because their communicative actions are intrinsically polemical. This polemical nature is clearly recognized by these public communicators. They sometimes compare themselves to *geomgaegs* 검객, which means swordsmen in Korean. Some of them call

themselves—in English—“keyboard warriors,” rather than *nongaegs*.¹¹⁰ These terms, “swordsmen” and “warrior,” reveal the polemical characteristic of their communicative actions.

Since citizen polemicism requires its performers to engage in polemical communication, it is not easy for non-polemical people to commit themselves to the social role. In fact, most committed citizen polemicists I met in my research are indeed polemical. They are inclined to criticize opinions with which they disagree and to argue with their critics. Quite a few of those committed citizen polemicists have not only polemical attitudes but also enthusiasm for refuting what they believe is wrong or unjust.

The social role of citizen polemicism helps citizens form their own judgments on current affairs and issues, brings interpretive, moral, and practical dimensions of public matters to the fore in public communication, and supplies depth to news stories. A more important contribution of citizen polemicists to public communication is to bring about critical and contentious communicative interactions among citizens about public matters. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the design of message-response association and, as a result, the rise of networked immediate audience together have fostered critical and contentious communication interactions. The emergence of citizen polemicism is another source of the growth of these communicative interactions. By actions of judging public matters and offering such judgments in public, citizen polemicists light the fire of criticism, discussion, debate, contention, and clash among citizens. They fuel this fire by actions of arguing with their audiences. In short, citizen polemicists’ communicative actions are like Midas’ touch that makes public issues controversial and debatable to citizens. In the process of this critical and contentious communication, ordinary citizens are transformed from members of the mass audience into both judges of public matters and participants in public communication.

In South Korea, citizen polemicism is a central part of online political talk; and the citizen polemicist is an ideal model of online-talk participants. What I identified in this chapter, thus, is not just the nature and functions of a new social role that I call citizen polemicism, but also what characterizes online political talk and what online-talk participants think is worthy of imitation. This chapter shows that judging public matters and arguing about such judgments are central to online political talk. It also suggests that online-talk participants primarily seek to form

¹¹⁰ Some South Koreans use the word *keyboard warrior* as a term to refer to a citizen polemicist, not only because they think a citizen polemicist is polemical, but also because they think the citizen public communicator is politically active only online without any political participation off-line.

judgments on public matters and to share these judgments with fellow citizens. In the next chapter, I will investigate why some citizens are committed to citizen polemicism. Through this investigation, I try to show citizen polemicists' motivations, understandings of citizen polemicism, and self-understandings.

Chapter 5

Citizen Polemicism as an Avocation: Passion, Self-Presentation, and Civic Mission

Many people who perform the social role of citizen polemicism sporadically post their thoughts and judgments online. Unlike these “occasional” citizen polemicists, however, quite a few citizen polemicists consistently provide their thoughts and judgments on a variety of public matters. For example, the citizen polemicists Multuksimsong, Juklimnupil, and Kim Kyung Sook, whom I mentioned in the previous chapter, have engaged in citizen polemicism for extended periods of time. Multuksimsong has been posting his opinions on public matters online for about seven years. Juklimnupil and Kim Kyung Sook engaged in citizen polemicism for about two years and four years, respectively. Another citizen polemicist, who uses “Bitoseryeok” as his online name, started posting his thoughts and judgments on public matters online in early 2004. According to him, he has posted his opinions online more than once a week for about five years since then. Bitoseryeok, a white-collar worker in his middle forties, said in his interview, “If I don’t write any messages [online], I feel like I’m missing something” (personal communication, November 2, 2007). He also said:

When I didn’t have anything to write about, I tried to look for something to write about. I go to portal sites and look over news in order to find something on which I can voice my opinions. (personal communication, November 2, 2007)

As these cases show, online communication has given rise not only to the social role of citizen polemicism but also to people who are dedicated to citizen polemicism as a self-conscious activity. Even though citizen polemicism is not their occupation, they are committed to this communicative action. In this sense, citizen polemicism is their avocation.

With the rise of open publishing based on the Internet, anyone can easily be a public communicator. In reality, however, not everyone becomes a dedicated public communicator. There are, in fact, a limited number of citizen public communicators who regularly and continuously post their public stories on the Internet. This is not surprising if one considers that they cannot expect to earn their living by such public communication. They furthermore could have to pay a price for their public speaking. In conducting my research, I saw many people who read citizen polemicists’ messages everyday and often posted their short responses to those messages, but did not post their own original messages in which they gave reasons for their

opinions and made an argument. These people said that they sometimes felt like posting their thoughts about public matters. Some of them said that they typed their messages on computers, but in the end they did not post them online. When I asked these non-posters why they did not post their messages online, they expressed the worry about the price that they would pay for their public speaking. The price includes the time and effort for thinking about public issues, taking sides, and expressing their ideas in a written form, and the risks caused by making their ideas public.¹¹¹ Posting thoughts and judgments on public issues online puts the poster at risk of being ignored, criticized, or derided in a public place. That is, engaging in citizen polemicism requires a high level of mental effort, a considerable amount of time, and courage.

Why are some citizens, nevertheless, committed to engaging in citizen polemicism? In this chapter, I attempt to answer this question. In other words, I try to explore how citizen polemicism becomes an avocation.

Even though citizen polemicism is a newly emerging phenomenon, it can be understood under two existing categories of human actions: media use and political participation. These two forms of human actions have gained much attention from researchers of human action. While media use has been a central research topic in communication and media studies, political participation has been one of the most intriguing issues for political scientists and sociologists. In attempting to answer what makes some people committed to citizen polemicism, thus, it would be a reasonable first step to explore the perspectives of previous studies that have been conducted on these two categories of human actions.

In communication and media studies, many studies on media use have been conducted by uses-and-gratifications researchers. Early media effect studies—called “the study of campaigns” or “the study of mass persuasion”—in the 1940s and 1950s regarded people as passive audiences, who respond to the stimulus of media messages. In contrast to these studies based on the stimulus-response model of action, uses-and-gratifications research assumes that people are active media users, in the sense that they decide to use media and choose media messages in order to satisfy their needs or wants (Katz, 1959; Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974; Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rogengren, 1985; Rogengren, 1974; Rubin, 2002). In this research, “gratifications sought” or “felt needs” are motivations for media use. Uses-and-gratifications researchers do not

¹¹¹ For the difficulty of writing, see Becker (1986), and Kellogg (1994). For the price of public speaking, see Goffmann (1959), Mainsbridge (1980), and Schudson (1984, 1986).

put, theoretically, any limitations on the extent of the forms of gratifications. The gratifications of media users, therefore, can take any forms as long as they can be felt or perceived by media users.

Many uses-and-gratifications researchers have tried to elaborate this model of media-use action by taking into consideration additional factors that are believed to influence media-use motivations and actions. Some researchers have examined social and psychological origins of or effects on “gratifications sought” (Conway & Rubin, 1991; Finn & Gorr, 1988; McQuail, Blumler, & Brown, 1972; Perse & Rubin, 1990; Rosengren & Windahl, 1972; Slater, 2003). Based on the expectancy-value theory of human action, another group of researchers has attempted to modify the previous uses-and-gratifications model by adding new factors: media users’ attitude toward an individual medium or message type, and the subjective possibility or expectation of gaining “gratifications sought” through using a certain medium or consuming a certain type of media message (Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rosengren, 1985; Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1985; Swanson & Babrow, 1989). Still another group of researchers has conducted research on examining the roles of social and psychological factors that influence media-use action: for example, media involvement, media dependency, social contexts of media use, or individual life-position attributes (Lull, 1980; Perse, 1998; Rubin & Rubin, 1982; Sun, Rubin, & Haridakis, 2008). In short, uses-and-gratifications research is centered on the idea that “gratifications sought”—more exactly, gratifications that media users believe they can gain through media use—are primary factors that determine media use. In this research, media-use motivation and action are influenced by the social conditions and psychological predispositions of media users.

These factors such as gratifications, social conditions, and psychological predispositions have also been considered to be important in explaining political participation. Contemporary political participation research has been conducted against the backdrop of the economic model of political action. In this model, political actors are individual interest-seekers, the goal of political participation is to seek a collective good, and political participation is the cost that participants pay. According to this model, individual citizens’ political participation is irrational because their participation itself has an extremely small possibility of making a difference in a political outcome (Downs, 1957), or because they can enjoy the benefits of a political outcome regardless of their actual participation (Olson, 1965). Rational political actors, therefore, should be free-riders. The rise of this economic model of political action has led political participation

researchers to try to answer why many individual citizens participate in politics and why some citizens are more active in their political participation than others, rather than why many citizens do not take part in the political process.

In answering these questions, political scientists and sociologists have presented a number of factors and models that may account for political participation.¹¹² In particular, relevant to explaining a commitment to citizen polemicism are two types of factors: the resources that make it easier for individual citizens to pay the cost of participation, and selective benefits available to political participants. These resources include communication and organizational abilities, material elements like time and money, and psychological elements such as political interest, or political efficacy (Lipset, 1960; Verba & Nie, 1972; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Many political participation researchers have pointed out that political participation itself can be the benefit for individual citizens rather than the cost. They have emphasized, as the selective benefits of political participation, the psychological gratifications that individual citizens gain from political participatory actions. These gratifications include social benefits such as interaction with other people or gaining respect from other people, civic benefits like the satisfaction of fulfilling a civic duty, and the benefits of expressing one's own preference or identity (Fiorina, 1976; Knack, 1992; Riker & Ordeshook, 1968; Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 1995; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995; Uhlaner, 1989). Based on these empirical studies, political participation researchers have argued that political participation is correlated to two main traits of individual political actors: socioeconomic status such as education and income, and psychological predispositions such as political interest, political efficacy, a sense of political responsibility, group consciousness, or commitment to specific policies.¹¹³

This brief review of these media use and political participation studies shows that the two groups of research build upon the same model of human action, called the means-end model. In this model, human action consists of two main dimensions: goals and means. Human actors have their own goals and try to accomplish these goals by means of their actions such as media use or political participation. The goals of human action are regarded as “gratifications sought” in media use research and as collective goods and psychological satisfactions in political

¹¹² These factors and models include the negligibility of the cost of political participation, political mobilization, game theoretic models, and backward-looking adaptive learning model (see Green & Shapiro, 1994; Kanazawa, 2000; Leighley, 1995; Rosenstone & Hansen, 2003/1993; Whiteley, 1995).

¹¹³ Psychological predispositions are sometimes called political involvement and engagement in political participation studies.

participation research. In the means-end model, various factors—for example, social, psychological, or cultural factors—that influence human actions are reduced to two types: what forms the goals of human actors, and resources and constraints of human actions. That is, the roles of these factors that influence human actions are restricted to shaping the goals of human actors and to setting the limit of the means employed. In examining the influence of these factors on human action, the media use and political participation research have emphasized the importance of social conditions and psychological predispositions of human actors.

Hence, if the question of *why some citizens are committed to citizen polemicism* is explored from the means-end model on which media use and political participation studies rely, this question would be answered by identifying what benefits or gratifications these citizens gain through citizen polemicism, what social conditions characterize citizen polemicists, and what psychological characteristics these new public communicators have. Social conditions of citizen polemicists—such as income or education—can contribute to explaining why some people are committed to citizen polemicism while others are not. The social conditions, however, could not be a direct answer to why citizen polemicists are committed to citizen polemicism, unless most citizens with similar social conditions are willing to engage in citizen polemicism or unless the social conditions are correlated to particular beliefs, ideas, or motivations at an individual level. From the means-end model, accordingly, the answer to the question about some citizens' commitment to citizen polemicism can come down to two factors: the benefits or gratifications that citizen polemicists believe they can gain through their communication activities, and citizen polemicists' psychological traits such as political interest, political efficacy, or interest in and attitude toward writing and public speaking.

The exploration of these two factors, however, is not enough to explain commitment to citizen polemicism. In order to make sense of this commitment, it is necessary to understand *why* the benefits or gratifications that citizen polemicists expect to gain through citizen polemicism are important for them and *why* they consider citizen polemicism to be an important means in seeking those benefits or gratifications. These issues are concerned with citizen polemicists' understandings of the world, themselves, and citizen polemicism: in other words, citizen polemicists' worldviews, self-understandings, and meanings of citizen polemicism. These elements in knowing and believing—which is subjectively perceived but socially constructed—

cannot be reduced to the dimensions of the new public communicators' goals and means.¹¹⁴ Quite a few scholars have captured this third dimension of human action by different terms: for example, "world images" (Weber, 1970/1922-23),¹¹⁵ "conceptual structures" (Geertz, 1973),¹¹⁶ and "the cognitive element" of action (Warner, 1978). In answering *why some citizens are committed to citizen polemicism*, thus, it is necessary to explore not only citizen polemicists' benefits, gratifications, and psychological traits but also their senses and worldviews with regard to citizen polemicism and to examine how the latter elements are interconnected with the former elements.

From this perspective, I explore the question of why some citizens are committed to citizen polemicism. I thus attempt to identify what committed citizen polemicists think about their communicative actions as well as what pleasures they gain from this communicative action. This chapter, thus, will provide information of what meanings citizen polemicism carries and further what self-understandings committed citizen polemicists have. But my goal is not to show every factor that leads some South Korean citizens to be dedicated to citizen polemicism. Rather, I will describe main thoughts and pleasures that committed citizen polemicists share. In doing so, I will show not only the contents of these meanings and pleasures but also their intensity—that is, the fact that committed citizen polemicists have serious thoughts and strong feelings about practicing citizen polemicism.

¹¹⁴ In criticizing use-and-gratifications research, James Carey and Albert L. Kreiling (1973) pointed out that this research depends on the means-end model of human action. In trying to reveal the limitations of this model in explaining human action, however, they focused on its assumption about the goals or motives of human action, rather than the assumption that human action is reduced to two dimensions of goals and means. They seemed to regard the means-end model as utilitarian model based on the assumption of a forward-looking and utility-seeking actor. Carey and Kreiling, thus, attempted to show the existence of human actions that do not hinge on this assumption of a human actor: for example, normative action, expressive action, or backward-looking and adaptive action. However, as shown by the cases of Talcott Parsons' voluntary theory of action and recent uses-and-gratifications research that regards normative satisfaction as a motivation for media use, non-utility goals of human action can be included in the means-end model.

¹¹⁵ In explaining Max Weber's idea of human action, Talcott Parsons (1937) described world images as "interpretations of the meaning of the world" (p. 668).

¹¹⁶ Clifford Geertz's famous comparison between human and animal is probably one of the best remarks to show the third dimension of human action that is not reduced to its goals and means. He illustrated the nature of the human as follows: "Beavers build dams, birds build nests, bees locate food, baboons organize social groups, and mice mate on the basis of forms of learning that rest predominantly on the instructions encoded in their genes and evoked by appropriate patterns of external stimuli: physical keys inserted into organic locks. But men build dams or shelters, locate food, organize their social groups, or find their sexual partners under the guidance of instructions encoded in flow charts and blueprints, hunting lore, moral systems and aesthetic judgments: conceptual structures molding formless talents" (1973, pp. 49-50).

In this chapter, at first, I delineate that citizen polemicists engage in their communicative actions not just as their hobby but as their passion. In doing so, I identify motivational, cognitive, affective, and technological sources of this passion for citizen polemicism. I also illustrate that the passion for citizen polemicism comes from the association of these different sources.

Then I show that dedicated citizen polemicists are not just pleasure-seekers or mere passion-driven public communicators. I introduce two key meanings that citizen polemicism has for citizen polemicists: self-presentation and civic mission. These two meanings are interconnected with citizen polemicists' self-understandings. The sense of citizen polemicism as a self-presentation action is combined with the fact that citizen polemicists regard themselves as judging subjects: specifically, subjects who think of and judge public matters. The sense of citizen polemicism as a civic mission is associated with citizen polemicists' self-identity as political subjects—in their term, *simins*—who not only have political and social rights but also should serve the public good through political participation. In this chapter, *simin* is used as a term to contain this normative sense of citizenship in South Korea. I describe that the two meanings of citizen polemicism provide citizen polemicists with sources of moral motivation. I thus argue that citizen polemicists are morally motivated communicators.

Citizen polemicism as a passion

Most citizen polemicists I met in my research said that they had started posting their opinions on public matters online due to their disagreements with other opinions, their complaints about authoritative or popular opinions on a certain public issue, or their anger at injustice and irrationality in certain contemporary affairs. For example, Bitoseryeok began to engage in citizen polemicism when he was furious about the fact that South Korea's National Assembly impeached then-president Roh Moo-Hyun in early 2004.¹¹⁷ Juklimnupil, a mid-ranking police officer, started posting his messages about the public world online because he sharply disagreed with the news reports about a controversy over investigative authority in early 2005. The first message that housewife Kim Kyung Sook posted online was a critique of a popular opinion that was critical of a South Korean actress who posed nude for a series of provocative photographs in early 2004.¹¹⁸ The role of these emotions of disapproval and anger in practicing citizen

¹¹⁷ Roh's impeachment was subsequently rejected by South Korea's constitutional court.

¹¹⁸ For this affair, see footnote 10 in Chapter 4.

polemicism is not surprising if one considers that the Internet makes it possible for ordinary people not only to speak their emotions and opinions to a large number of audiences but also to do so right away when they feel an impulse to express their emotions and opinions in public. The Internet allows disagreement, complaint, or anger to easily transform ordinary citizens into public communicators.

More often than not, these sorts of disagreements, complaints, or angers drive citizen polemicists to engage actively in citizen polemicism. Juklimnupil continued to post his arguments about a controversy about investigative authority for more than one year. A major part of the messages that Kim Kyung Sook posted online from early 2004 to late 2007 are grounded on her strong disagreement with the policies and statements of President Roh and the opinions of Roh's supporters. When Multuksimsong, for more than one year, wrote his thoughts and judgments with regard to the Dr. Hwang scandal and argued with fellow citizens, he was driven by his anger at the injustice of Hwang Woo Suk's scientific misconduct and the irrationality of Hwang's supporters.

The role of disagreement, complaint, or anger in engaging in citizen polemicism is clearly expressed by a forty-year-old citizen polemicist, who uses "Sidaeyugam" as his nickname. He is the owner and administrator of a web forum, *Nparam*.¹¹⁹ On this web forum, he posted a message titled "The force of the dark side" on September 19, 2007, three months before the 2007 presidential election in South Korea. By "the force of the dark side," he meant anger and hostility.¹²⁰ In this message, he talked about what the differences are between his previous messages and recent messages and what has caused such differences:

I sometimes ask myself whom I got angry at. That is because there are big differences in intensity and enthusiasm between the messages that I wrote before and the messages that I write now. I surely got angry in the past. I was motivated by my anger at Roh Moo-Hyun's administration that took power by deceiving people, my anger at people on the Left who dominated the Internet and spread wrong arguments, and a strong hostility to them because they produced failed economic policies and broke down people's livelihoods.

¹¹⁹ He had been a central figure and administrator of *Polizen* before he established *Nparam*.

¹²⁰ In this message, Sidaeyugam mentioned that he borrowed this term from the movie *Star Wars*. In fact, in the message he used the English word, not Korean transliteration. The original term in the movie, however, is "the dark side of the force."

As a result, I could write passionately and absorb myself in passionate debate. The anger and hostility that motivated me, however, are disappearing. ...the force of the dark side that existed in my mind is disappearing. ...unclear messages, arguments without enthusiasm, texts without impression that are filled with play of words, ...are the state of the messages that I write these days. ...probably, this is the dilemma that every *nongaeg* in our times is facing. (Sidaeyugam, Force of the dark side, 2007)

When Sidaeyugam posted this message online, he had engaged actively in citizen polemicism for about five years. In this message, he said that his anger at Roh and Roh's supporters had driven him to be committed to citizen polemicism. But Roh's term of office was scheduled to end soon and then presidential candidate Lee Myoung-bak—whom Sidaeyugam was supporting—was widely predicted to win the coming presidential election. The citizen polemicist, therefore, felt that his anger at Roh and Roh's supporters became weakened. As a result, he was losing enthusiasm for engaging in citizen polemicism. This message shows that the feelings of disapproval and indignation played an important role in making Sidaeyugam committed to citizen polemicism.

Attention should also be paid to the tone of Sidaeyugam's message. It reveals that he has engaged in citizen polemicism as less a hobby and more a passion, which stemmed, according to the above message, primarily from his anger. Many committed citizen polemicists I met are indeed passionate public communicators. When they described their experiences of citizen polemicism, they said that they had been "immersed in," "excited by," or "addicted to" posting their thoughts and judgments online and arguing with other people.

Dissent, dislike, and indignation are important sources of passion for citizen polemicism. Yet, the passionate devotion to citizen polemicism cannot be reduced to citizen polemicists' emotions of disapproval and anger. It should be emphasized that disagreement, complaint, and indignation are only one side of the coin. That people disagree with other opinions on a certain public matter means the fact that they make their own judgments about the public matter. Complaints about authoritative or popular opinions on a certain public issue usually come out of concern about the issue at hand. Anger at injustice and irrationality implies passion for justice and rationality. In short, since citizen polemicists make their own judgments, are concerned with current affairs and issues, or have passion for justice and rationality, they disagree with other

opinions, complain about authoritative or popular opinions on the public matters, or feel anger at injustice and irrationality. Hence, the passion for engaging in citizen polemicism also stems in part from the act of taking sides, concern over public matters, and the passion for justice and rationality. It is demonstrated by the fact that citizen polemicists do not just express their disagreement or emotion but provide persuasive accounts of their dissent, dislike, or indignation.

What drives some citizens to engage passionately in citizen polemicism, therefore, is not only their impulse to vent their feelings of disapproval or anger but also their expectation that their message would make fellow citizens accept their perspectives or opinions. In other words, they expect to influence fellow citizens' opinions. By criticizing news media reports about the controversy over the investigative authority and passing judgment on various issues with regard to the controversy, Juklimnupil tried to persuade fellow citizens to accept that reform of the investigative authority is necessary. He said in his interview that he thought he might be able to change citizens' opinions that are shaped by news media (personal interview, January 4, 2006). Multuksimsong said in his interview: "I thought that, if I wrote what I believe is right, it would have been able to change people in a positive way and increase the number of people who think in the same way that I do" (personal communication, November 10, 2007). A theology Ph.D. in his late thirties, who started posting his opinions online in August 2004, said in his message posted on *Moveon21* on December 18, 2006:

It is not easy for anyone to write a message, because [a writer] can sometimes be embarrassed or suffer from being scolded. Like other people, I feel stress about writing, no matter what I write. The reason why I, nevertheless, try to write a message is my small hope that my knowledge and thoughts may be of help to people, even if one person. (Wooriyeri, 2006)

These remarks show that citizen polemicists' commitment to citizen polemicism is founded in their hope that their claims can change fellow citizens and contribute to making their society better.

In addition to the emotions of disapproval and indignation and the expectation of social influence, the passion for citizen polemicism is grounded in the pleasures that stem from audience response. The Internet makes audience response visible through comments and the number of hits. Thus, online public communicators can recognize, easily and immediately, how their stories are responded to by their audiences. An ex-journalist for a daily newspaper in his

late forties and an owner of a specialized bi-weekly newspaper also in his late forties are central figures, respectively, of *Seoprise* and *Moveon21*. In my separate interviews with them, each of them emphasized that what distinguishes writing on a web forum from writing for printed newspaper is the fact that online writers can identify audience response immediately (personal communication, August 8, 2005 for the ex-journalist; October 19, 2007 for the owner of a bi-weekly newspaper). When they published their stories in printed newspapers, they could not know how many people read their stories and what their audiences thought of their stories. In contrast, the Internet makes audience response visible to them. The two figures said that they were excited to post their messages online because they could identify audience response immediately. My informants share this feeling with regard to citizen polemicism.

According to my informants, it is fun to see that other people react to their messages. In particular, they emphasized that audiences' positive comments make them happy. Quite a few audience members post short comments conveying positive responses: for example, "It's good;" "It touches my heart;" or "Thank you for a good message." These sorts of comments cheer citizen polemicists. A positive comment, however, is not the only type of audience response that encourages people to dedicate themselves to citizen polemicism. When I asked Bitoseryeok why he was committed to posting his stories about public matters online, he said in his interview:

It's fun. It's fun to get readers' responses.... When I post my message online, I feel like I throw out my stories in front of many people. It's like weak catharsis. What really pleases me is that someone responds to it. [For instance,] posting a comment, insulting, [or] praising. Such responses all make me delighted. Praise is not the only thing that gives pleasure [to me]. It is also fun to get negative comments. (personal communication, November 2, 2007)

Like Bitoseryeok, many citizen polemicists I met said that even negative or critical comments often made them excited.

In addition to audience comments, citizen polemicists are also inspired by the fact that their messages are sometimes read by a large number of people. The numbers of hits on citizen polemicists' messages vary according to citizen polemicists, messages, or online sites. Such numbers usually range from several tens to several thousands per message on web forums and blogs. The numbers sometimes reach more than tens of thousands. Considerable numbers of messages posted on popular portal sites are clicked on more than 100,000 times. These large

numbers of hits excite citizen polemicists.

In short, citizen polemicists are encouraged to post their thoughts and judgments online by the fact that their messages receive attention, are approved by other people, and produce audience reactions. Furthermore, since citizen polemicists can identify these sorts of audience responses immediately, they are more excited to engage in citizen polemicism.

One of the most well-known remarks about the Internet is: “On the Web, everyone will be famous for fifteen people.”¹²¹ Even though this remark characterizes the nature of fame based on online communication, it also suggests that online posting is driven by the joy of being recognized and remembered by other people. This joy is another source of the pleasure that citizen polemicists gain from engaging in citizen polemicism. As citizen polemicists repeatedly write the online stories that draw attention and support from many audiences, they become recognized and remembered by visitors to the Internet sites where they post their messages. This leads citizen polemicists to have constant nicknames, as most of the committed ones do. Scores of citizen polemicists use their real names as their nicknames. Quite a few citizen polemicists use their same nicknames on different Internet sites. As citizen polemicists—more precisely, their constant nicknames—become recognized and remembered by these visitors, their messages, in turn, gain more attention and more active response from the online-talk participants than other posters’ messages do. In fact, many online discussions and debates evolve from these well-known citizen polemicists’ messages. These citizen polemicists become central figures on online sites for political talk.

For instance, Multuksimsong is a well-known figure on the Internet sites—*Seoprise*, *Nosamo*, and *Zzizilnet*—where he has posted his messages. Many visitors to these sites remember his nickname and his positions on public issues. Since his messages have sometimes been transferred to other Internet sites, his nickname is recognized and remembered even by Internet users who have not visited the Internet sites where he has posted his messages. Multuksimsong said in his interview that the number of people who know him by his online name would be much larger than that of people who know him by his real name (personal

¹²¹ For the origin of the line, see the article about the “15 minutes of fame” on Wikipedia. This line is an adaptation of American artist Andy Warhol’s remark about the nature of celebrity based on mass media. In his interview, he said in 1968 that “in the future, everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes.”

communication, November 10, 2007).¹²²

Citizen polemicists are not only recognized and remembered but also respected by online-talk participants. On Internet sites and in offline meetings, Multuksimsong was considered an Internet figure equivalent to a star or a hero by online-talk participants who were critical of Dr. Hwang and his supporters. The citizen polemicist has been respected even by online-talk participants who did not support his position on the Dr. Hwang scandal. When I participated in off-line gatherings of the members of *Seoprise* who supported Dr. Hwang during his scandal, one of the main topics of their conversation was Multuksimsong. Quite a few Hwang supporters showed their respect for the citizen polemicist. Even though they disagreed with his opinions on the Dr. Hwang scandal, they praised his sense of justice and his intellectual and communicative ability.

Citizen polemicists are sometimes highly esteemed. Popular citizen polemicists have their fans. These fans post appreciative comments on their favorite citizen polemicists' online messages. These acclamations are not limited to online venues; they sometimes continue offline. On November 13, 2006, I joined a meeting between Multuksimsong and a fan. The fan in his middle forties has lived in a different city, Busan, which is about a five-hour drive away from the citizen polemicist's place of residence. He nevertheless came to the meeting by train in order to see the public communicator. He showed strong respect for Multuksimsong. The Busan resident wanted to treat the citizen polemicist to dinner and drinks out of respect for him.¹²³ In conducting my research, I observed many cases in which fans of citizen polemicists expressed a high degree of respect for their favorite citizen polemicists. Being highly esteemed by others is a rare experience in ordinary citizens' lives. This experience, therefore, leads to making citizen polemicists excited to engage in citizen polemicism.

After citizen polemicists start engaging in citizen polemicism, they feed on these joys of receiving immediate and active feedback from audiences, gaining attention from a large number of people, and winning fame. Audience response not only gives citizen polemicists these joys but also reinforces initial motivations that lead them to express their thoughts and judgments in

¹²² Some people may argue that most citizen polemicists are famous to at most hundreds of or thousands of people. These numbers, however, can be enough to motivate citizen polemicists to dedicate a part of their lives to practicing citizen polemicism. In fact, my study shows that citizen polemicists are encouraged to post their messages online by the number of their audiences.

¹²³ In the meeting, the Busan resident explained how he became a fan of Multuksimsong. When he happened to read Multuksimsong's messages about the Dr. Hwang scandal on *Seoprise*, he was so impressed by the messages that he searched for and read all messages that the citizen polemicist had posted on the forum.

public. Audience response strengthens citizen polemicists' emotional attachment to their positions or causes and intensifies their concern with public matters. It also contributes to making citizen polemicists believe that their messages have actual effects. As I mentioned earlier, one of the motivations for engaging in citizen polemicism is the expectation to influence fellow citizens' opinions. This expectation cannot be an actual and consistent motivation for engaging in citizen polemicism unless citizen polemicists believe that their expectation of social influence can be realized through their public communication. The citizen polemicists I met believe that their messages have influence on audiences and society. They said that they had identified such effects through visible responses from audience members. My informants mentioned, as one of these indicators, the fact that quite a few audience members express, through their comments, their thanks for posting good messages and helping to judge current issues. My informants also regarded the number of hits on each message as another indicator that their messages have actual effects. A high school teacher in his middle forties, who uses "Peureundal" as his nickname, said in his interview that one of his messages posted on *Agora*—which is a web forum managed by a portal site *Daum*—was clicked on more than 200,000 times (personal communication, February 9, 2007). When he talked about this experience, he looked like he had been amazed by the number of hits. He said that the number of hits made him feel that his messages have actual social influence. In this sense, the visibility of audience response in online communication makes citizen polemicists recognize not only that their messages are approved and praised by readers but also that their messages influence audiences and society. This recognition reinforces the motivation of influencing fellow citizens' opinions. In short, as people begin to post their thoughts and judgments about public matters online, they are encouraged to do citizen polemicism by audience response, which not only provides citizen polemicists with joys but also strengthens their initial motivations for posting their arguments online.

This experience, which is shaped by interactions between technological characteristics of the Internet and online-talk participants' practices, contributes to transform online message posters into committed citizen polemicists. This transformation is exemplified by police officer Juklimnupil's case. As introduced in Chapter 4, he began to post his messages online in April 2005 because he had a complaint about the news media reports of the controversy over how to share the investigative authority between the public prosecution and the police. In reporting this

controversy, the news media highlighted the conflict between the two government organizations, rather than explaining and evaluating the legal and policy issues regarding the controversy. Juklimnupil and his fellow police officers, therefore, tried to explain this issue to ordinary citizens. They wrote letters to the editors of major newspapers and sent stories to the South Korean online newspaper *Ohmynews*.¹²⁴ Their letters and stories, however, were neither published in any newspapers nor adopted as news stories in *Ohmynews*. Only on *Seoprise* did their messages receive heated responses ranging from harsh critiques to appreciative comments.

Juklimnupil continued to post his messages about the controversy over investigative authority on *Seoprise*. In his online message, he said that he had posted about eighty messages over his 340 days on the forum. He broadened the topics of his messages to other public issues. He was recognized and respected by many visitors to *Seoprise*. Quite a few members of the web forum regarded him as one of the exemplary citizen polemicists. In this process, citizen polemicism became his passion.

Juklimnupil described how citizen polemicism became his passion in his message titled “I need to cool off,” which was posted on his blog on November 21, 2006. At the beginning of the message, he expressed how much he was emotionally involved with the issue of the independence of the investigative authority of the police. He said that the cause “was not what I found, but what came to me, as if it is my destiny.” He continued to say:

[The struggle for the independence of the investigative authority] absorbed me more completely than anything before. I was happy enough by being immersed alone. Moreover, it has an exciting good cause for the police, society, and the future of the country. And then, it gave birth to my other-self, Juklimnupil, that came to replace “Boriopbba.”¹²⁵

I wrote like one possessed. For one year, I posted a message almost every four days on *Seoprise* and received more concern and encouragement than I deserved. The messages written in this period developed me. I had a surprising experience that my messages made me have faith in my value, rather than that I expressed my faith through writing. This experience is as if a shaman possessed

¹²⁴ For more information about *Ohmynews*, see Gillmor (2004), and Kim & Hamilton (2006).

¹²⁵ Boriopbba is his online nickname that he has used in the web forum of a marathon club.

by a spirit walks on [the blade of] a fodder-chopper.¹²⁶ Without doubt the past one-and-a-half years was the most exciting period in my life. I was as much happy as excited. (Juklimnupil, 2006)

This message reveals that Juklimnupil had a feeling of unusual excitement and enthusiasm toward citizen polemicism. It also shows how such a feeling was formed. At first, the police officer started posting his messages online because of his commitment to a cause of the independence of the investigative authority. He, then, received attention and encouragement from members of *Seoprise* when he posted his messages on the web forum. According to this message, expressing his thoughts and judgments on the web forum made him more strongly committed to his thoughts and judgments. When Juklimnupil, in his interview, talked about audience' responses that he had received on *Seoprise*, he expressed a stronger feeling than what he described in the above blog message. In his interview, he said that he was impressed by such responses and, as a result, was excited to post his messages on the web forum (personal communication, January 4, 2006). He added that he was, at first, driven by the commitment to his cause, but later he came to enjoy posting his opinions and receiving audience' responses on *Seoprise*. According to the blog message and his interview, in short, his passion for citizen polemicism was constructed by the association of his commitment to the cause of the independence of the investigative authority and his experience of having received attention and praise from audience members.

In the same blog message, Juklimnupil also implied that he was happy in practicing citizen polemicism because he was passionate about the public communication activity. The feeling of happiness is shared by many committed citizen polemicists I met. After Sidaeyugam established his web forum—*Nparam*—in March 2007, he was criticized by some forum visitors for the fact that he posted his own messages supporting then-presidential candidate Lee Myung-Bak. One of his critics—using “Danhobak” as a nickname—argued that people regarded *Nparam* as being biased toward Lee because its administrator, Sidaeyugam, had expressed his personal political opinion supporting Lee. The critic recommended that Sidaeyugam stop posting his own messages on the forum. In responding to this critique, Sidaeyugam emphasized that the forum business did not pay off. He then said:

¹²⁶ A fodder-chopper has a long straight blade. In Korea, shamans have traditionally shown people their magic power by walking on the sharp blades of a fodder-choppers with bare feet.

I like writing. I like writing my thoughts, having them read by many people, and discussing them. It is probably the only reward that I get for doing this [managing and moderating *Nparam*]. But Danhobak is asking me to give up even this. If I can't write my thoughts, there is no reason I need to do this. (Sidaeyugam, 2007)

After reading this message, Beritas, who is a pastor and one of the central citizen polemicists of the forum, posted a message about his similar feelings for practicing citizen polemicism. In this message, he said: "When I write my thoughts after my own heart, I'm as happy as can be."

Citizen polemicists usually begin to post their thoughts and judgments online due to their emotions of disapproval and indignation, their commitments to a position or a cause, or their expectations of social influence. Once they start engaging in citizen polemicism, they come to enjoy audience response, which becomes a central motivation for practicing citizen polemicism. Audience response also plays an important role in forming citizen polemicists' understandings of and beliefs about their communication activities. These understandings and beliefs contribute to strengthening the initial motivations for practicing citizen polemicism. In brief, citizen polemicists' emotions, commitments, and expectations are associated with their experiences, understandings, and beliefs, which are shaped and framed by the technological characteristics of the Internet. In this process of association, these factors reinforce each other, motivating the citizen communicators to commit themselves to citizen polemicism. Committed citizen polemicists, furthermore, are recognized, referred to, and respected as citizen polemicists—usually as *nongaegs* in Korean—online and offline by other people, whose number is larger than the number of people who know citizen polemicists in their offline lives. It is no wonder, therefore, that they begin to identify themselves as citizen polemicists. This self-identification, in turn, reinforces their desire to engage in citizen polemicism. Committed citizen polemicists, accordingly, come to engage in citizen polemicism as less of an impulse or a hobby and more of a passion.

Citizen polemicism as self-presentation

Quite a few researchers of online communication have argued that the lack of nonverbal cues as warning signs of misbehaviors—called the social context cues—or visual anonymity leads to the decline of online-talk participants' sense of individuality, which is called deindividuation or depersonalization (see Kiesler, Siegel, & McGuire, 1984; Reicher, Spears, & Postmes, 1995;

Spears, Lea, & Lee, 1990; Walther, 2010; Wang, Walther, & Hancock, 2009). Unlike this argument, many online-talk participants develop a clear self-awareness through engaging in citizen polemicism. As they begin to post their thoughts and judgments about public matters online, they come to be recognized and remembered through these thoughts and judgments. These experiences intensify their sense of association between themselves and their thoughts and judgments posted online. For citizen polemicists, thus, their online messages become not mere expression of their thoughts and judgments but representations of themselves.

This sense of citizen polemicism as self-presentation is revealed by the fact that the consistency of perspectives and positions in interpreting and judging public matters is considered an important value in practicing citizen polemicism. A white-collar worker in his middle forties, who uses “Ssarinun” as his nickname, posted his message on *Moveon21* on September 17, 2007, after he read the messages that he had posted on *Seoprise* in 2003. In this message, he expressed his impression about his past messages. He said, “As I reflect on what I said in the past, I want to think about what kind of person I should hold myself to be.” He added, “If I don’t want to be ashamed of my life, it depends on how to maintain consistency.” Like Ssarinun, many citizen polemicists occasionally post their impressions and thoughts about their past messages. In these messages, they regard their past messages as records that show not their passing thoughts and judgments but what they did and who they were. In their view, thus, their thoughts and judgments about current public matters should be consistent with the previous thoughts and judgments that they posted online. In fact, flip-flopping is widely considered one of the main vices in practicing citizen polemicism. Citizen polemicists’ attitudes toward consistency were clearly expressed in the message that pastor Beritas posted on *Polizen* on March 28, 2006. In this message, he asserted, “For *nongaegs*, *guel*s are their faces for which they should take responsibility.” *Guel* 𑉆 means “writing” or a “piece of writing” in Korean. He continued to say:

If a *nongaeg* was Bae Yong-jun one day, but becomes Ok Dong-ja the next day, it cannot be accepted.¹²⁷ A *nongaeg*’s *guel* should have philosophy and consistency. But since *nongaegs* are not perfect people, they should continue to change and develop. Accordingly, they can change their positions and perspectives. When it happens, *nongaegs* should make such a change known and try to make readers understand it. (Beritas, March 28, 2006)

¹²⁷ Bae Yong-jun is a handsome movie actor, and Ok Dong-ja is a funny-looking comedian in South Korea.

This message shows that Beritas regards citizen polemicists' messages—in his term, *guel*s—as their personas. It therefore is not surprising that, like Ssarinnun, he emphasizes the importance of consistency in practicing citizen polemicism. In this message, he also argued that if citizen polemicists cannot take consistent positions and perspectives in judging current public matters, they should explain such changes to their audiences. This emphasis on consistency in practicing citizen polemicism demonstrates that citizen polemicists' messages—which express their thoughts and judgments—are considered to represent citizen polemicists themselves.

Citizen polemicists are not only recognized and remembered but also evaluated through their thoughts and judgments about public matters. They are ignored, insulted, criticized, approved, praised, or respected by other people, the number of whom is usually larger than the number of people who know them in their offline lives. As a result, they are distinguished from other people. Practicing citizen polemicism, therefore, is not just presenting a digital persona but revealing oneself as a subject of unique personality and ability; in other words, revealing the unique value and ability of oneself in the world.

This view of citizen polemicism was clearly expressed by a small business owner in his early fifties, who uses “Hakkojae” as his nickname. When I asked him why he posted his stories online, he said in an off-line conversation with me, “I want to show, by expressing my thoughts, that there exists a person who has these thoughts” (personal communication, July 11, 2007). His comments are in line with those from Multuksimsong. The latter citizen polemicist told me that posting opinions on public matters online offers a “feeling of expressing myself” (personal communication, November 10, 2007). Revealing oneself through posting thoughts and judgments online was described not as a feeling but as a clear idea in his message titled “On anonymity,” which was posted on *Zzizil.net* on October 31, 2007. In this message, Multuksimsong expressed a critical view of the Internet-users who are reluctant to have a constant nickname in posting their opinions online. They, he recommended, should not hide themselves behind the cloak of “anonymity.” By anonymity the citizen polemicist meant that an online-talk participant does not use a constant nickname, not that an online-talk participant does not use her/his real name as an online name. This shows that he views an online nickname less as a pseudonym to hide an online-talk participant's offline identity and more as an online name—

like a stage name—to represent a consistent digital persona of an online-talk participant.¹²⁸ In his view, online-talk participants can reveal themselves in the world through their digital personas. In the same message, Multuksimsong asserted that being unwilling to reveal oneself in the world is “not different from being petty and having a poor soul that does not admit one’s value.” He ended the message with following sentences:

Everyone has value. If one does not understand the meaning of this remark, one cannot maintain horizontal and equal relationships. Though anonymity may hide one’s deviant behavior, it is nothing more than the cloak that conceals one’s unique and great value. (Multuksimsong, October 31, 2007)

This message shows that he regards his online communication activity as an activity that reveals his worth in the world.

Like Hakkojae and Multuksimsong, my other informants also expressed a similar sense in their interviews and offline conversations: the sense that they reveal themselves or their values and abilities in public through posting their thoughts and judgments online. In answering my question of why they post their messages online, they mentioned their desire or expectation of having their value recognized or of proving that their capability is better than that of others. For citizen polemicists, practicing citizen polemicism is thus to present themselves or their values and abilities in the world and to make themselves distinguished from other people.

In explaining their motivations for posting their thoughts and judgments about public matters online, my informants said that they could have *jaki jonjaegam* 자기 존재감—which can be literally translated to “a sense of self-existence”—when they posted their messages about public matters and received audience response. By the sense of self-existence, my informants mean not the sense of the existence of the self as a subject of thought and action—in other words, self-awareness—but the sense of oneself as a meaningful or valuable individual existence: in brief, the sense of self-worth. This sense was emotionally expressed by a contract worker in his late forties, who uses “*Socialjustice*” as his nickname on *Hantoma*, which is a web forum that the daily newspaper *Hankyoreh* operates. He told me in an off-line social gathering of the *Hantoma* members:

I work until 9 PM. I wake up at 7 AM and work for twelve hours. I write until 1 AM

¹²⁸ Police officer Juklimnupil expressed the same view in his message posted on *Seoprise* on November 21, 2006. He said that his online name—Juklimnupil—represents his “other-self.”

after work. Writing [messages online] gives me vitality for my life. I feel like I'm alive. I express myself through writing [online]. (personal communication, December 9, 2006)

This remark shows that while *Socialjustice* earns his living by engaging in his occupation, he believes he puts meaning into his life through engaging in citizen polemicism. In short, citizen polemicists have the feeling that their existence as individuals becomes meaningful or valuable through practicing citizen polemicism.

It is not surprising for people to want to express themselves in the world and to strive to distinguish themselves from other people by revealing their values and abilities. Political scientist Ronald Inglehart and his colleagues have argued that with economic development, people place an increasing emphasis on “self-expression value” (Inglehart, 2003; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).¹²⁹ The rise of identity politics in the second half of the twentieth century has brought the issue of expression and recognition of self and identity to the fore in studies of society and politics (see Calhoun, 1995; Darnovski, Epstein, & Flacks, 1995; Fraser, 2000; Taylor, 1994). These phenomena imply that the rise of the desire for self-expression characterizes the modern world.

What sets citizen polemicists' self-presentation apart, however, is that they try to express themselves or to reveal their values and abilities by the very act of expressing their individual thoughts and judgments about public matters, rather than consumption preferences, cultural tastes, social status, economic wealth, occupational career, or collective identities. Hannah Arendt (1977/1961) argued that through a manner of judging “the things of the world,” a person “discloses to an extent also himself, what kind of person he is...” (p. 223). Like Arendt, citizen polemicists believe that one's thoughts and judgments about public matters constitute oneself: in other words, *who I am*. They also suppose that the quality of such thoughts and judgments represents the value and ability of oneself. These beliefs were clearly and emotionally expressed by a middle-aged business man, who has posted his opinions on *Seoprise* and *Zzizil.net*. This business man, who obtained a computer science Ph.D. in America, said in his interview:

If [someone] criticizes my thoughts, I think [she/he] criticizes me. I would be an empty existence without my thoughts. If I lose a debate, my life would be

¹²⁹ By self-expression values, Inglehart and his colleagues mean a very broad range of values such as environmental protection, the women's movement, and a demand for participation in political decision making.

miserable. At this point in time, a cool self-evaluation should be made. (personal communication, November 7, 2007)

This remark shows an intense feeling that his thoughts—precisely, the thoughts that he posts online—embody himself and display his worth. In short, citizen polemicists consider their thoughts and judgments about public matters to define and represent *who they are*. In this sense, they are in the first place subjects who think of and judge public matters: to put it simply, judging subjects.

The growth of the sense that thoughts and judgments about public matters define and represent *who I am* is one factor that has led to some citizens' commitment to citizen polemicism. The Internet has played important roles in the rise and spread of this sense, not only because it makes it possible for individual citizens to be distinguished from other citizens, based on their thoughts and judgments, but also because, as shown in the previous section, the Internet encourages ordinary citizens to communicate their thoughts and judgments about public matters in public.

When I asked my informants why they post their messages online, many of them said that they did so in order to identify themselves or to ascertain their self-identity. By “self,” they meant their thoughts and judgments about public matters. This remark not only demonstrates that citizen polemicists regard thoughts and judgments about public matters as a central part of oneself; but the remark also shows that before citizen polemicists post their thoughts and judgments online, they do not clearly know what their thoughts and judgments are. In most cases, people do not form clear thoughts and judgments about public matters (see Zaller, 1992). What they form in their minds with regard to public matters are usually vague feelings and senses. They, thus, cannot recognize their thoughts and judgments clearly. Yet, when people try to post their thoughts and judgments online, they not only put some serious thought into the public matters but also make an effort to form thoughts and judgments that can be expressed in typed texts. As a consequence, their vague feelings and senses are transformed into clear thoughts and judgments objectified in words. Since these thoughts and judgments are not only clear but also embodied and articulated via typed texts, the thoughts and judgments can be clearly identified. In this sense, practicing citizen polemicism is not just to express one's thoughts and judgments about public matters in public but also to form and identify one's thoughts and judgments.

This nature of citizen polemicism is revealed by my informants' remarks about their self-transformations. They said in their interviews that they had not formed clear thoughts and judgments about public matters before they began to post their thoughts and judgments online. According to my informants, however, practicing citizen polemicism has led them to form clearer, more analytical, and more logical opinions on public matters.

Citizen polemicists form their clear thoughts and judgments about public matters because they are motivated to communicate their opinions in public. As they form their clear thoughts and judgments—objectified in typed texts—about various public matters, they, through such thoughts and judgments, can recognize themselves and be recognized by other people. This association between citizens and their thoughts and judgments is a prerequisite for the rise of the sense that thoughts and judgments about public matters define and represent *who I am*. In this respect, the Internet contributes to the rise of this sense by encouraging citizens to post their thoughts and judgments about public matters online.

With the rise of online political communication, therefore, many citizens become, in the first place, judging subjects. This change in self-understanding contributes to the rise of committed citizen polemicists. They are committed to citizen polemicism because they believe they can reveal themselves or their values and abilities in the world through the online public communication. In this sense, practicing citizen polemicism is to form oneself, to identify oneself, to express oneself, and, as a result, to become oneself.

Citizen polemicism as a civic mission

Citizen polemicists sometimes describe their online communication activities as *guelppang* 글뽕, which is an Internet slang term in South Korea. This term indicates that people provide *guel* 글—which means “writing” or a “piece of writing” in Korean—instead of *mom* when they are required to contribute to political or social activities. *Guelppang* comes from an off-line slang term, *momppang* 몸뽕, which is a derivative of another slang term, *ddamppang* 땀뽕. *Ddamppang* refers originally to soldering or patching in Korean. But the term's meaning has been broadened to include an activity where people make do with something else or someone else when there is a lack of what they need. *Momppang* is the term formed by the combination of *ddamppang* and *mom* 몸, which means “body” in Korean. *Momppang* refers to an activity where people make do with *mom*—more exactly, time and physical effort—instead of something else,

for example, money, skills, or ideas.¹³⁰ This term is also used for describing an activity where people provide time and physical effort instead of money when they should donate money. For example, when people help natural disaster victims by providing time and physical effort rather than donating money, they can say that they did *momppang* in Korean. When citizen polemicists describe their communication activities as *guelppang*, they view their writing as a substitute for off-line political activities—which can be described as *momppang*—such as street demonstrations, picketing, volunteer works, and social movement or political party activities. The term *guelppang* also implies that citizen polemicists feel they should provide *guel*: more specifically, engaging in citizen polemicism.

Many citizen polemicists I met or observed expressed this sense of “I should write.” This sense was clearly expressed by a working woman in her late thirties, who uses “Bogdaengy” as her nickname. In explaining why she posts her opinions on public matters online, she said:

I just think that it is a right thing to do and what I should do. Even if people do not change [their opinions after reading my message], that is fine with me. But I want to let them know that there exists this opinion. This is [my] duty. (personal communication, November 11, 2007)

When I asked Multuksimsong why he posts his messages about public matters online, he mentioned a “sense of public duty” as one of his motivations (personal communication, November 10, 2007). As these remarks show, citizen polemicists have a sense that citizen polemicism is their mission.

This sense of citizen polemicism as a mission hinges on the idea that citizen polemicism is not just a personal pleasure-seeking activity but is also political participation. My informants regard their communication activities as political participation, not only in the sense that they voice their opinions on public matters in public, but also because they think that they can affect political outcomes through citizen polemicism. My informants identify their communication activities’ influence through audiences’ visible responses such as the number of hits and their audience comments (see section 3 in this chapter). Some of my informants also mentioned that their opinions could have direct influence on professional politicians because politicians monitor

¹³⁰ The meaning of *momppang* is similar to that of *sweat equity* in English.

online political talk. In fact, they have experiences of receiving feedback from politicians.¹³¹ In addition, citizen polemicists believe that political participation is a civic mission. This belief was clearly expressed by Multuksimsong. In his message posted on November 5, 2005,¹³² he asserted that “political participation is not a selective right but a necessary duty for the members of a republic.” It therefore is no wonder that citizen polemicists view their communication activities as their civic mission.

Yet, it is not just the idea of citizen polemicism as political participation that leads my informants to regard their communication activities as their civic mission. When my informants explained why they feel they should post their opinions online, they emphasized that through their communication activities, they could contribute to making a society better. Bogdaengy said in her interview that in posting her opinions online, she wanted to show other people the importance of social justice and morality (personal communication, November 11, 2007). She complained that many South Koreans accepted economic interest and growth as a primary political value. Multuksimsong said in his interview that he expected his messages to help fellow citizens think of and judge public matters in a rational way (personal communication, November 10, 2007). He added, “I got a feeling like satisfaction with contributing to public interest, [when I posted my arguments].” In short, my informants regard citizen polemicism as an activity of seeking the public good rather than personal pleasure.

This sense was more clearly expressed by the Eastern medical doctor in his middle forties.¹³³ In his message posted on *Seoprise* on August 4, 2004, he said:

As a *gueljaengy* 글쟁이,¹³⁴ I vow at least to try to do my best for posting a message (even though I don’t do so in reality). That is my responsibility.

Benefits? A reply, [in which a reader says] that “it’s good,” makes me happy....

This is the benefit that I get by writing a message on *Seoprise*. In spite of such

¹³¹ Politicians’ reactions to online political talk, the relationship between politicians and online-talk participants, and the interactions between professional politics and online political talk are important issues that should be studied in investigating online political talk: in particular, the political role and effect of online political talk. However, since my main focus is on the culture and activity of online political talk, these issues are not explored in my study.

¹³² This message was posted on an Internet site of *Nosamo*, which is a group of supporters of then-president Roh Moo-hyun.

¹³³ The Eastern Medical doctor used different nicknames on *Seoprise* and *Moveon21*. He used Najeunyueja and Takue on *Seoprise*. In late 2005, he stopped posting his messages on *Seoprise* and began to post on *Knowhow21*, which was later renamed *Moveon21*. He has used *Mare* as his nickname on *Knowhow21*.

¹³⁴ *Gueljaengy* has been traditionally used as a modest term to refer to people who are committed to writing. This term can refer not only to *Internet* or *simin nongaeg* but also to occupational writers such as novelists, essayists, journalists, or columnists.

[little] benefit, the reason why I make an effort to search the Internet and look up ancient events and incidents [for writing messages on *Seoprise*] is—

Exaggeratedly speaking, it is my wish to assist *gaehyuk seryuk* 개혁 세력.¹³⁵

(Takue, August 4, 2004)

The term *gaehyuk seryuk* refers, in Korean, to groups that seek reform of institutions or a society. In contemporary South Korea, in particular, the term has been used to refer, in its narrow sense, to political or social movement groups that seek democratic and progressive changes in politics and society and, in its broad sense, to citizens who support these democratic and progressive changes. The Eastern medical doctor has supported the cause of democratic and progressive reform. In posting his thoughts and judgments on public matters online, he has expected his online communication activities to contribute to the cause of democratic and progressive reform.

Like this Eastern medical doctor, my informants believe that through citizen polemicism, they work for what they think is right or better for a society: for example, the development of rationality, social justice, democracy, or common interest. Due to this belief, they feel that they should engage in the communication activity. In short, my informants regard citizen polemicism as their civic mission, not just because they think this communication activity is political participation but also because they believe the activity is political participation contributing to the public good rather than individual or group interest.

In my informants' view, participating in politics for the public good is a mission that they should undertake as citizens: in their term, *simins*. When they call themselves *simins*, they mean not just members of a political association who have political and social rights, but also members of an interest-based and moral community who should serve the public good. For my informants, citizen polemicism is political participation through which they expect to serve the public good. In practicing citizen polemicism, they identify themselves with *simins* who perform their mission.

It is not new in South Korea that many citizens regard political participation for the public good as their mission. Health policy specialist Sherry R. Arnstein began her famous article about citizen participation as follows:

The idea of citizen participation is a little like eating spinach: no one is against it

¹³⁵ The Eastern medical doctor has often introduced ancient incidents and events in explaining his thoughts and judgments on public matters.

in principle because it is good for you. Participation of the governed in their government is, in theory, the cornerstone of democracy—a revered idea that is vigorously applauded by virtually everyone. (Arnstein, 1969, p. 216)

As she claimed, no one denies that citizens' political participation is, in principle, necessary for democracy. In South Korea, in fact, many citizens have been well aware that they should participate in politics. They have also been aware that they should serve the public good through political participation. When many South Koreans took to the street for democracy under authoritarian regimes, they believed that they were serving the public good through political participation. The demonstrators identified themselves as members of a political community who perform their mission.¹³⁶

Even though many citizens in South Korea have been aware that they should participate in politics, they have not participated actively on a daily basis.¹³⁷ Their political participation has usually been limited to going to the polls on election days. Unlike these South Korean citizens, however, citizen polemicists are willing, on a daily basis, to take more active roles in politics than just voting. In their interviews, my informants expressed their desire and willingness to take an active part in politics. That is, they share a participatory political culture, in which citizens, according to political scientists Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba (1989/1963), do not only form feelings and opinions on political decisions made by the political elite but also are “oriented toward an ‘activist’ role of the self” in the process by which political decisions are made (pp. 18).¹³⁸ In short, they are not only aware that political participation is their civic mission; but they are also motivated, on a daily basis, by their sense of political participation as a civic mission.

This participatory political orientation is manifested by Multuksimsong. He explained his belief about citizens' political role in his message titled “What should we do? How should we do [it]?” which was posted on *Seoprise* on June 24, 2005. Multuksimsong posted this message as his

¹³⁶ In South Korea, anti-government demonstrators for democratization called themselves different names: *minjung*, *simin*, and *kookmin* (for these three concepts, see footnote 20 in chapter 1). In the 1960s and the 1970s, the demonstrators usually called themselves *simin* or *kookmin*. In the 1980s, however, the term *minjung* began to be preferred by radicals. *Simin* and *kookmin*, nevertheless, have still been popular for non-radicals. Even though the demonstrators for democratization preferred to call themselves different terms, most of them shared the idea that political participation is their mission.

¹³⁷ Almond and Verba (1989/1963) have reported a similar trend in America. They have argued that American citizens do not participate actively in politics, even though they think they should do so. They have called this phenomena “civic culture.”

¹³⁸ Almond and Verba (1989/1963) have classified political culture into three types: the parochial, the subject, and the participant types of political culture.

response to the discussion about how to deal with Neo-liberalism, which three members of *Seoprise* conducted on the web forum. This discussion, he thought, concerned an issue of *what* decision to make. In his message, he tried to bring up another issue that he thinks is more urgent: *how* to make decisions.

In this message, Multuksimsong presented his view of democracy, in which democracy is more than a method of selecting a political leader through competitive election. He described his view of democracy as follows:

In a normal democratic society, decision-making process should be democratic. Being democratic means that a society's decision is made according to what the majority of people in the society want. Even though it sounds simple, it is very difficult to accomplish such a process itself.

This democratic process of making decisions is, even if a conventional phrase, characterized by discussion through debate, persuasion through analysis and evaluation, and, in a final stage, majority rule based on mutual understanding. I become tired even of hearing it because I have heard too much of it, but the importance of this process is a criterion to evaluate democracy. (Multuksimsong, June 24, 2005)

According to Multuksimsong, central to democracy is the democratic process of making decisions, which is characterized by “discussion through debate, persuasion through analysis and evaluation, and, in a final stage, majority rule based on mutual understanding” (Multuksimsong, June 24, 2005).

In the same message, right after these paragraphs, Multuksimsong asked “Does this state [of the process of making decisions] exist only in utopia?” He answered, “No, it doesn’t.” He then asserted, “There certainly exists a feasible and practical way [to make the democratic process of decision-making work].” “It is difficult [to establish it],” he claimed, “only because [its establishment] is impeded by people who believe that a democratic way of making a decision is against their personal interests.” In this message, the citizen polemicist pointed to *jeongchi jayoungeobja* 정치 자영업자 as main objectors of the democratic process of making decisions. *Jeongchi jayoungeobja* is a slang term coined and used by online-talk participants. Its literary meaning is close to “political business people.” This term refers, in a contemptuous way, to professional politicians who work primarily for their private interests, rather than the public

good.

In Multuksimsong's view, political decisions can be made in a democratic way when political parties are controlled not by party leaders but by party members. He thus believes that intra-party democracy is required for the democratic process of making decisions. He ended his message as follows:

I clearly know that we should not let elite people, even a president, make such important decisions. Surely, I am one of the forty five million people in this country and have this [percentage] share of the right to make decisions. I want this [my] right to be realized through a local council of the members of a political party in my residential area, a political party, and National Assembly. And I know this is right.

I want to decide how to make decisions before discussing what decisions to make. So, I still talk about the reform of political parties and the *Kigan* (기간) party membership system and criticize *jeongchi jayoungeobja*.¹³⁹ Is my priority wrong? (Multuksimsong, June 24, 2005)

In these last paragraphs, Multuksimsong emphasized that establishing intra-party democracy is a primary task in South Korea.

This message clearly indicates that Multuksimsong is "oriented toward an activist role of the self" in the process of making decisions. According to him, democracy is not just a method of selecting political leaders through competitive election, but rather, it is a process in which political decisions are made primarily through discussion and persuasion and in a final stage by majority rule. He therefore believes that citizens should not only participate in voting but also take more active parts in the process of making decisions. This participatory political orientation did not remain just in his political belief and idea. In fact, he joined a political party in late 2003 and participated actively in its local organization until it disbanded voluntarily in August 2008. He also asked, in his online messages, other people to join a political party and to make an effort to improve intra-party democracy.

In addition to establishing intra-party democracy, according to Multuksimsong, citizens

¹³⁹ Under the *Kigan* party membership system, people can be members of a political party only when they pay the party membership fee. In South Korea, most political parties have allowed ordinary citizens to be party members without paying membership fee. Local party organizations, therefore, have been controlled easily by leading politicians. The *Kigan* party membership system has been considered an important institution that would contribute to improving inter-party democracy in South Korea.

should try to understand and judge public matters. In his message titled “Three big mafias in South Korea,” which was posted on July 11, 2005 on *Seoprise*, he argued that elite people stand in the way of building a good society—which is, according to him, a society in which the people rule—in South Korea. He has been critical of various groups of elites, such as politicians, government officials, journalists, lawyers, and intellectuals. In the message, however, he focused on criticizing three elite groups in education, art, and religion, which he called “three big mafias.” Multuksimsong then emphasized that citizens should keep themselves politically awakened. He has often mentioned the importance of citizens’ political awakening in his other messages and offline dialogues. By political awakening of citizens, he does not just mean that citizens should overcome political disinterest. Multuksimsong also means that in understanding and judging contemporary affairs and public issues, citizens should not depend on interpretations and judgments about the public matters that occupational journalists and intellectuals provide. In his view, citizens should critically examine information, knowledge, and agendas provided by the elite people. In short, he insists that citizens should be independent and critical judges of public matters.

In the last part of the message about the “three big mafias,” Multuksimsong mentioned what awakened citizens should do. He ended the message as follows:

[We] should examine society more seriously, distinguish between right and wrong, continue to debate and discuss, broaden such debate in [Korean] society, and offer our arguments [in public].

[We] should make an effort to become experts in our areas and to live truthful lives.... [We] shouldn’t be corrupted, shouldn’t fall asleep, and should be awakened.

[We] have to be awakened, even though it is necessary to take a stimulant medicine. (Multuksimsong, July 11, 2005)

According to these paragraphs, awakened citizens should not only make judgments on public matters but also express their thoughts and judgments in public. In Multuksimsong’s view, it is important for citizens to offer their opinions in public because they should not let professional politicians, journalists, and other elite groups remain dominant in interpreting and judging public matters and setting public agendas. By voicing what they think is right, good, rational, or important, democratic citizens should try to challenge elite-dominant public discourses and to

share their thoughts and judgments with fellow citizens.

In the above message, Multuksimsong also argued that awakened citizens should engage in discussion and debate. In his other online messages and offline conversations, he repeatedly emphasized the importance of discussion and debate among citizens. Citizens, in his view, should try to criticize and refute other citizens' claims that they think are invalid. Citizens should also expose their thoughts and judgments to other citizens' criticism. Multuksimsong believes that this critical interaction would help citizens form better opinions on public matters. He said in his interview that ordinary citizens are not just amateurs (personal communication, November 10, 2007). They, he said, are experts in certain areas: for example, the areas in which they have interest and experiences or make a living by doing work. He thinks that everyone can become experts in their areas of specialization. Based on this view, he requested in the above message that fellow citizens "make an effort to become experts" in their areas. Multuksimsong believes that if these citizens share their views of public matters related to their special areas, they would be able to learn from each other and to reach informed, rational, and nonsubjective, even though not ideal, conclusions about the public matters. In this sense, it is important for citizens to engage in discussion and debate with fellow citizens. Such discussion and debate, Multuksimsong said, can also help undecided citizens to understand and judge public matters rationally and without relying on elite people's interpretations and judgments.

According to Multuksimsong, in sum, democracy requires citizens to make independent and critical judgments about public matters, to relate such judgments in public, and to engage in discussion and debate with fellow citizens. The tone of the above paragraphs reveals how significant he considers these democratic roles of citizens.

Multuksimsong's view of citizens' democratic roles is echoed by most other citizen polemicists. They believe that citizens should take an active part in politics. In their view, citizens should not leave judgments about public matters to political and social elites. This view was succinctly and clearly expressed by the Eastern medical doctor in his middle forties. He said in his interview:

[We] should become not subjects but citizens. While citizens are people who judge and decide by themselves, subjects are people who follow judgments and decisions that a king makes (personal communication, November 7, 2007).

In fact, citizen polemicists are willing to take more active roles in politics than just voting. Even

though citizen polemicism is the main political activity that citizen polemicists conduct on a daily basis, their political participation is not limited to this communication activity. Like Multuksimsong, quite a few citizen polemicists have made an effort to promote intra-party democracy. (Not every citizen polemicist, however, shares the idea that promoting intra-party democracy is a necessary and primary task in South Korea. Some citizen polemicists think that they should stay away from party politics in order to keep their political purity.) Many citizen polemicists have donated money to their favorite politicians, social movement groups, and web forums. They have sometimes joined picketing and street demonstrations. Some citizen polemicists have participated in establishing and managing web forums designed for political discussion. In short, many citizen polemicists do not just believe that they should participate actively in politics; but they also have the desire and willingness to do so. This participatory orientation leads them to feel that they should engage in citizen polemicism.

Many citizen polemicists I met said that in the early 2000s, they began to participate actively in politics. They said that they had not been active in politics before. Some said that they had not even been interested in politics. Others said that even though they had been interested in politics, they had not taken more active roles in politics than just voting. In short, many citizen polemicists' participatory orientation was formed in the early 2000s, when online political talk became popular in South Korea.

The rise of this participatory political culture shared by citizen polemicists stems from their strong distrust of political and social elites, which include politicians, government officers, journalists, and intellectuals. Citizen polemicists believe that these elites seek their own private interests rather than the public good. As Multuksimsong's above messages show, most citizen polemicists are highly critical of the elites. In fact, their many messages are to criticize the elites and to challenge their claims and reports. When my informants explained why they are willing to take active roles in politics, they emphasized their distrust of and anger at political and social elites. This indignation leads citizen polemicists to be willing to take more active political roles than just voting.

The Internet has also played important roles in the rise of the participatory political culture. Before the rise of the Internet, the ways citizens could participate in politics, other than voting, were limited to joining political parties, social movement groups, or street demonstrations. Hence, even if citizens wanted to take an active part in politics, it was hard for

them to do so on a daily basis because they have their own jobs. By producing a new political space—the space of online political talk—that these citizens can easily access, the Internet allows them to get more easily involved in politics on a daily basis. In addition, the Internet makes it possible for citizens to take pleasure in receiving immediate and active feedback from audiences, gaining attention from a large number of people, and winning fame when they post their political opinions online. As a result, the Internet encourages citizens to voice their political opinions in public. As citizens begin to engage in citizen polemicism, they come to be more interested and more emotionally involved in politics. With this increase of interest and emotional involvement in politics, citizen polemicists are more willing to take active roles in politics and regard themselves more as political subjects.

Citizen polemicists as political subjects identify themselves with *simins*: citizens who not only have political and social rights but also should serve the public good through political participation. The *simin* identity is not new one in South Korea. This political identity was a source of mobilizing many South Korean citizens to join street demonstrations for democracy under authoritarian regimes. In fact, South Korean citizens have been well aware that they as *simins* should serve the public good through political participation. Many citizens, however, have not been motivated by this notion of citizenship to take, on a daily basis, more active roles in politics than just voting. Unlike these citizens, citizen polemicists are motivated by their *simin* identity to take an active part in politics. This association between citizen polemicists and the *simin* identity depends on a participatory political culture, which has stemmed from the strong distrust of the elite and emerged with the rise of Internet. In this culture, citizens believe that they should participate in the processes of making political decisions, make independent judgments on public matters, and share their thoughts and judgments with fellow citizens. They are also willing, on a daily basis, to take an active part in politics. For these participatory citizens, citizen polemicism is a main political activity that they can conduct on a daily basis. The participatory political culture, therefore, motivates citizens to engage in citizen polemicism and lead them to regard themselves as *simins*. Furthermore, as citizens begin to engage in citizen polemicism, they come to identify themselves more strongly with *simins*. As a consequence, citizen polemicists consider their communication activities to be not just pleasure-seeking activities but also their civic mission.

Conclusion: Citizen polemicism as morally motivated public communication

This chapter is concerned with a new class of public communicators—which I call *committed citizen polemicists*—who commit themselves to the social role of citizen polemicism. The essential practices of their social existence are to pass judgment on contemporary affairs and public issues, to make arguments about their judgments, and to get into arguments with fellow citizens; in short, I judge and argue with fellow citizens, therefore I am. The main goal of this chapter has been to examine why some citizens dedicate some portion of their lives to citizen polemicism, even though it is burdensome and requires much time and effort. In order to answer this question, I have identified their main motivations and described their conceptual and normative ideas behind the motivations.¹⁴⁰

For many citizens who have continuously engaged in citizen polemicism, practicing citizen polemicism is a passion rather than just a hobby. This passion results from the interconnection among citizen polemicists' emotions and expectations with regard to public matters, their experiences with online communication, and technological characteristics of the Internet. Most citizen polemicists begin to post their thoughts and judgments about public matters online due to their disapproval of others' opinions and indignation at injustice or irrationality, their expectation of influencing fellow citizens' opinions, or both. As they start engaging in citizen polemicism, they come to enjoy the pleasures of receiving immediate and active feedback from audiences, receiving attention from a large number of people, being approved and praised, and winning fame. These pleasures make them excited to engage in citizen polemicism. The pleasures also strengthen citizen polemicists' initial motivations for posting their thoughts and judgments online by reinforcing their emotional attachment to their opinions, increasing their concern with public matters, and helping them believe that their communication activities have actual influence on fellow citizens. In addition, since these new public communicators are recognized and respected as citizen polemicists—usually as *nongaegs* in Korean—online and offline by other people, they begin to identify themselves as citizen polemicists. This self-identification, in turn, contributes to increasing the pleasures that they

¹⁴⁰ In this chapter, I have not described every sense and feeling that citizen polemicists have with regard to citizen polemicism. Rather, I have highlighted particular senses and feelings, which I believe are central to the new public communicators. I therefore do not argue that every citizen polemicist manifests these senses and feelings in their pure forms.

enjoy through engaging in citizen polemicism. They, hence, become passionate communicators, even though they engage in public communication as a non-occupation.

The social role of citizen polemicism is characterized by the fact that it is driven by individual pleasure and passion without economic reward and organizational constraints. Citizen polemicists, thus, are open to the volatility and explosiveness of their feelings about practicing citizen polemicism. Accordingly, it is not surprising that the social role of citizen polemicism is practiced by many impulsive public communicators. When these impulsive public communicators feel anger at a wrongful act or are devoted to a certain cause, they passionately engage in citizen polemicism for a certain period. However, when such anger or passion weakens or disappears, the impulsive citizen polemicists go back to their private lives. Citizen polemicists can also be overwhelmed by their enjoyment of being accepted and acclaimed, their emotional excitement over influencing readers and society, or their devotion to their causes. They thus are tempted to post messages that are likely to draw readers' approval and acclamation, rather than messages that convey their actual thoughts and judgments. In addition, they are vulnerable to temptations to subordinate their judgments and arguments to the positions that they already took or to the politicians whom they are supporting. Due to these temptations and desires, citizen polemicists could degenerate into public communicators who lack independent thoughts and judgments or flexibility and breadth of view. In brief, since practicing citizen polemicism relies on individual pleasure and passion without economic reward and organizational constraints, this new social role is practiced by many impulsive, pandering, or uncompromising public communicators.

In spite of the volatility and explosiveness of the passion that makes citizens engage in citizen polemicism, there exist quite a few citizens like Multuksimsong who have continuously tried to post their own thoughts and judgments on public matters online and to keep their thoughts and judgments open to criticism. These citizens' commitment to citizen polemicism relies on their understanding of this communication activity, in which practicing citizen polemicism is considered a self-presentation activity and a civic mission.

Citizen polemicists think that they reveal themselves or their values and abilities in the world through practicing citizen polemicism. In their view, therefore, their existence as individuals becomes meaningful or valuable when they engage in citizen polemicism. This sense of citizen polemicism as self-presentation stems from the view that thoughts and judgments

about public matters define and represent *who I am*. In this view, citizen polemicists regard themselves as judging subjects: more specifically, subjects who think about and judge public matters. The Internet contributes to the rise of this sense by allowing individual citizens to be distinguished from other citizens, based on their thoughts and judgments about public matters, and encouraging citizens to post their thoughts and judgments about public matters online.

Citizen polemicists also regard citizen polemicism not just as a pleasure-seeking activity but also as their civic mission. This sense is grounded in their political identity as *simins*: citizens who should serve the public good through political participation. Citizen polemicists' identity as *simins* has been strengthened by their experience of citizen polemicism and the participatory political culture, which has stemmed from the strong distrust of the elite—such as professional politicians, journalists, or intellectuals—and emerged with the rise of the Internet.

As citizen polemicists regard themselves primarily as both judging subjects and political subjects (*simins*, in this case), citizen polemicism becomes their self-defined goal, which is both a self-presentation activity and a civic mission. This understanding of citizen polemicism leads these new communicators to regard citizen polemicism as a valuable communicative and political activity. Citizen polemicists, thus, have a moral sense that they should engage in citizen polemicism. This moral sense contributes to turning occasional or impulsive citizen polemicists into continuous citizen polemicists.

As mentioned above, individual pleasure and passion as motivations of citizen polemicism incline many citizen polemicists to pander to their audience or to take an uncompromising stance in discussion and debate with their critics. The sense of citizen polemicism as a self-presentation activity is another source of the temptation that leads citizen polemicists to be wishy-washy or stubborn. Since citizen polemicists believe that their thoughts and judgments about public matters reveal themselves or their values and capabilities, they are reluctant to offer opinions that are not expected to be supported by other citizens. They also have a strong feeling that they would lose face or their pride if their claims are refuted. This feeling makes citizen polemicists unwilling to make concessions or to admit fallacies and limitations of their claims.

Many citizen polemicists, nonetheless, have posted thoughts and judgments that are not welcomed by other citizens. They have also tried to be flexible and reasonable communicators in arguing with fellow citizens. What makes citizen polemicists resist the temptation to be

pandering and stubborn communicators is a moral sense of responsibility for practicing citizen polemicism.

This sense of responsibility is developed because citizen polemicism is regarded not just as a pleasure-seeking activity but as a self-presentation activity and a civic mission. The citizen polemicists I met emphasized this sense of responsibility in their interviews. Quite a few interviewees expressed this sense even before I asked them about it. My informants, however, do not have fully developed ideas of moral codes of responsibility. They, nevertheless, share a similar sense of what responsibilities they should take. The responsibilities that they emphasized include maintaining consistency of perspective in judging public matters, posting their own thoughts and judgments regardless of audience response, justifying their claims by responding to critical comments, or accepting the fallacies and limitations of their claims if they cannot defend the claims from criticism. These responsibilities are also regarded as factors that make the voice of the citizen polemicist legitimate (for this point, see chapter 6). My informants believe that they should be responsible when they post their thoughts and judgments online. They insisted in their online messages and interviews that they were willing to accept these responsibilities in posting their opinions on public matters online. In short, citizen polemicists are motivated by their moral sense with regard to citizen polemicism, and their communication activities are framed by their moral sense of responsibility. In this respect, citizen polemicists are not just pleasure-seekers and mere passion-driven public communicators. They are also morally motivated communicators.

While citizen polemicism is a central part of online political talk, committed citizen polemicists are active and vital online-talk participants. In addition, many ordinary online-talk participants are occasional citizen polemicists. In this respect, committed citizen polemicists are not fundamentally different from other online-talk participants. Hence, the features of citizen polemicists reveal the characteristics of ordinary online-talk participants as well, though these characteristics are more distinct among the former communicators than among the latter participants. In fact, the factors—which were identified in this chapter—that make some online-talk participants committed to citizen polemicism are also significant factors that motivate and encourage many citizens to engage in online political talk. In particular, anger at injustice and irrationality, audience response, the desire to form judgments on public matters, and the sense of civic mission play important roles in leading many citizens to participate in online political talk.

Like committed citizen polemicists, ordinary online-talk participants have a moral sense with regard to online political talk. They feel that they should participate in political talk. This feeling is based on their normative sense of citizenship. Ordinary online-talk participants also think that their thoughts and judgments about public matters express themselves and reveal their values and capabilities. Many online-talk participants, thus, are tempted to engage in citizen polemicism, even though they are hesitant to do so for fear of the price that they would pay for their public speaking. The view of citizen polemicism as a self-presentation action does not transform all online-talk participants into committed citizen polemicists; but this view, along with the sense of civic mission, provides these participants with a source of moral standards in light of which they assess other online-talk participants: specifically, citizen polemicists. The importance of the responsibilities—which I mentioned above—that committed citizen polemicists think they should take for practicing citizen polemicism is also accepted by ordinary online-talk participants. When the online-talk participants I met talked about fellow online-talk participants in my conversations and interviews, they often mentioned whether the participants took these responsibilities. A moral motivation and sense, thus, frames online-talk participants' actions and their understandings of this communicative action. In the next chapter, my focus will shift from why some citizens become committed citizen polemicists to why the voice of the citizen polemicist is considered to be legitimate.

Chapter 6

Bringing Common Sense to Politics: The Citizen Polemicist's Voice and Its Legitimacy

As online public communicators whom I call citizen polemicists came to be recognized to have political and social impact in South Korea, they began to be criticized, in particular by traditional public communicators such as professional journalists, politicians, or intellectuals. Their critics have pointed out various problems and limitations of their voices: for example, the lack of knowledge and fact-checking, partisanship, or the lack of politeness (for similar critiques of political blogs in America, see Carlson, 2007; Jordan, 2007). These critics believe that the voices of citizen polemicists are not worth listening to because they carry ignorant opinions, propaganda and incitement, or abuse and flaming. In this view, therefore, the new public communicators' voices are not legitimate public voices. Quite a few South Koreans, nevertheless, continue to listen to their voices. This is not just because, as described in chapter 4, citizen polemicists perform what traditional elite public communicators have failed to do: passing judgment on public matters and arguing with fellow citizens. This is also because their claims are believed to be worthy of attention. In fact, citizen polemicists and their audience think that their judgments about public matters are valuable for society. For these online-talk participants, in short, the voice of the citizen polemicist is not only an intriguing but also legitimate public voice.

What do South Korea's online-talk participants think makes the voice of the citizen polemicist legitimate? In this chapter, I investigate this issue: that is, the foundation of the legitimization of the citizen polemicist's voice as a public voice. By a public voice I mean a voice of a public communicator, who speaks to many unspecified people about contemporary affairs and public issues (see chapter 4, for the notion of public communicator).¹⁴¹

When a certain type of public voice is legitimate, citizens think that the voice should be heard in society. They are also willing to listen to this legitimate voice. Accordingly, it is not surprising that public communicators make an effort to legitimize their voices (see Bennett, Gresset, & Haltom, 1985; Eason, 1986; McCoy, 2001; Park, 2009; Reese, 1990; Schudson, 1995; Zelizer, 1990, 1993). In fact, most public communicators attempt to adopt a particular mode of legitimization when they engage in public communication. This mode of legitimization—which

¹⁴¹ In this chapter, thus, the term public voice does not include non-political types of public voices: for example, the ethnographic voice (see Clifford, 1983; Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Geertz, 1988) or the historical voice (See Blake & Phelps, 1994; Oakeshott, 1991).

sociologist Howard Becker (1986) has called “persona”—reveals the nature of the public communicators: specifically, who the public communicators are, how they relate to their audiences, and what communicative and political visions they have. In order to understand citizen polemicists as carriers of a new type of public voice, thus, it is significant to explore the mode of legitimization on which citizen polemicists rely.

The legitimacy of a certain type of public voice should not be equated with its credibility. The credibility of a public voice is related not only to the legitimacy of the voice but also to the performance of the carriers of the voice (see Eason, 1986; Fulton, 1970; Gaziano & McGrath, 1986; Meyer, 1988). While the former is concerned with the evaluation of *what* carriers of a public voice are expected to do, the latter relates to the evaluation of *how well* carriers of a public voice perform what they are expected to do. For example, even if carriers of a certain type of public voice are criticized for lacking sincerity and honesty or for failing to represent the perspectives and views that audiences prefer, it does not necessarily mean that the voice is not legitimate. In exploring the history of violence against the press in America, John Nerone (1990, 1994) has presented the concept of *inclusionary violence*. In this type of violence against the press, its users protested the bias of the press because the journalistic voice did not represent their positions and views. But they did not aim to make the journalistic voice illegitimate. Rather, they wanted their positions and views to be represented by the journalistic voice in the future. That is, what users of inclusionary violence complained about is not the legitimacy of the journalistic voice but the performance of journalists, which is a central part of the credibility of the journalistic voice. As this inclusionary violence case shows, the decline of the credibility of a public voice does not necessarily mean a crisis of the legitimacy of the voice. In this sense, the legitimacy of a certain type of a public voice should be distinguished from the credibility of the voice.¹⁴²

I do not intend to explore how well citizen polemicists perform what they are expected to do. Rather, I focus on what online-talk participants believe citizen polemicists perform. A certain type of public voice can be legitimized when the voice is believed to be desirable, appropriate, and proper for society. This belief stems, in large part, from the moral justification of the public voice, which shows that what the public voice provides is not merely private and subjective ideas

¹⁴² In a similar sense, Kevin G. Barnhurst and John Nerone (2001) have argued, “Although the content of the newspaper is often criticized for bias or sensationalism or silliness, the form of the newspaper is almost sanctified” (p. 1).

that are prone to personal prejudice, error, illusion, ignorance, or lying.¹⁴³ A legitimate public voice, thus, needs a widely accepted belief that what the voice carries is somehow more valuable than private and subjective thoughts of individual citizens. This chapter centers on this moral justification of the citizen polemicist's voice.

The goal of this chapter is not to provide my judgment of whether the voice of citizen polemicists should be considered a legitimate public voice. Instead, I aim to explore how citizen polemicists justify their voice as a legitimate public voice and why their readers think that the voice of citizen polemicists is morally justified. Yet, these online-talk participants do not have fully developed and tightly integrated ideas about the moral justification of the citizen polemicist's voice, even though they have clear senses of the sources of what justifies this voice morally. Hence, my description relies not only on what my informants said but also on my interpretation of what they said.

In this chapter, I first introduce traditional modes of the legitimization of public voices, in which public voices gain their legitimacy from the fact that carriers of the voices hold a special status: specifically, a transcendental or representative status. Then I show that citizen polemicists are neither transcendental nor representative public communicators in the sense that they are considered to be equal to their audience members. I emphasize that citizen polemicists and their audiences are regarded as equals, not just because they are all ordinary people who are opposed to social and political elites, but also because they are all considered common people who are identified as *simins*. In chapter 5, I have illustrated that the normative sense of *simin* has contributed to the rise of the idea of citizen polemicism as a civic mission. In this chapter, I demonstrate that the descriptive sense of *simin* has played an important role in constructing self-understanding of online-talk participants and legitimizing the voice of the citizen polemicist.

After discussing the traditional modes of the legitimization of public voices and the equal relationship between citizen polemicists and their audience members, I explore why the voices of citizen polemicists are believed to be legitimate public voices. I make two arguments: first, citizen polemicists are regarded as legitimate public communicators because they convey the

¹⁴³ Legitimization is not limited to the process of moral justification. It also relates to social, cultural, and psychological processes—which include practical and cultural supports and the process of collective acceptance—in which something new comes to be considered to be desirable, appropriate, and proper (see Johns, Dowd, & Ridgeway, 2006; Suchman, 1995; Tyler, 2006). The legitimacy of political power and institutions, however, depends more on moral justification than that of social entities—such as organizational forms or social practices—does (for the centrality of moral justification in the concept of legitimacy, see Grafstein, 1981; Habermas, 1975/1973).

voice of common sense; second, citizen polemicists' voices are considered to be commonsensical because they engage in communicative interactions with their audiences, in which they seek agreement and debate their arguments with their critics.

Two modes of legitimization of a public voice

Michael Schudson (1995) has described two types of professional journalism through examining the autobiographies of two American journalists: Lincoln Steffens (1866–1936) and Harrison Salisbury (1908–1993). The two journalists had different goals in reporting; while Steffens' goal was to explain the world, Salisbury's goal was to describe the world. Hence, the former searched for the essence and nature behind the world outside, whereas the latter sought facts about things in the world. Steffens represents the model of journalists as rational investigators of truth. In this model, journalists seek the essence of a society as a whole or serve the general interest. They therefore see the world from the perspective of a whole society or the general interest beyond individual perspectives or interests. Steffens asserted in a personal letter that "my concern is with anybody but myself, and my life is the life of the millions, the Greater New York" (Nevins, 1938, p. 129). Salisbury embodied the model of journalism as objective observation. In this model, journalists give voice to facts that exist beyond ordinary people's perceptions and understandings. In the message that he sent to Schudson as a response to Schudson's article about his journalistic activities, Salisbury described his craft as follows: "I try to dig out what is what and present it and let the facts (as I see them) move people's minds" (Schudson, 1995, p. 99). In short, journalists as rational investigators of truth want to see the world from the standpoint of *the everybody*, and journalists as objective observers of facts try to view things in the world from the standpoint of *nobody*.¹⁴⁴

Despite these differences in their goals and perspectives of reporting, the two types of journalists share the same source of legitimacy of their voices. They consider themselves spectators who are independent of society. Although they are mediators between the world and audiences, they think that they are separated from the world, their audiences, and even themselves. They believe that their thoughts, feelings, or desires have no place in their reporting. What makes the journalistic voice legitimate is the belief that journalists can see the world from

¹⁴⁴ The terms *truth* and *fact* can be each replaced with the terms *rational truth* and *factual truth*.

this transcendental position: in other words, from the status of super citizen (see Eason, 1986; Nerone, 2006a).

The journalistic voice is not the only type of public voice that relies on a transcendental mode of legitimacy. The voice of priests is another type of a transcendental public voice (see Walzer, 1987; Lessl, 1989). Priests are elite people who are distinguished from ordinary people by the fact that they represent extra-human authority. Their communication is didactic, because their voice conveys the messages of God or Nature and their interpretations of those messages to ordinary people who cannot access and understand such messages. The priestly voice obtains its legitimacy from the belief that the priest has a special ability to communicate with and understand God or Nature. Thomas M. Lessl (1989) has argued that the voice of public scientists is a modern version of the priestly voice. As priests base their voice on their religious authority, public scientists make their voice legitimate through their scientific authority. Dan Nimmo and James E. Combs (1992) have presented another modern version of the priestly voice: the voice of political pundits. The legitimacy of pundits' voice, they have contended, stems from the belief that they own special knowledge that ordinary people do not have. Even though these three types of public voices—the priestly voice, public scientists' voice, and the punditry voice—convey different types of stories, they are dependent on the same idea that the carriers of the voices stand outside the world of ordinary people and convey truth such as religious, scientific, rational, or technical truth. This transcendental position of public speakers provides their voices with legitimacy.

The transcendental mode of legitimization is not the only way to make a public voice legitimate. In the 1920s and 30s, vaudeville performer and actor Will Rogers was one of the most influential political commentators and newspaper columnists in America. His public voice, however, did not rely on the transcendental mode of legitimization. When he died in 1935, American politician, Joseph Taylor Robinson, described him as “probably the most widely known private citizen” (Yagoda, 1993, p. xi). As this description shows, Rogers was not considered a public communicator who inhabits the world of the elite. On the contrary, “he is what Americans think other Americans are like” (Rollins, 1988, p. 93). In addition, his public voice was believed to adopt the angle of ordinary American people and convey their common feelings and sense (Nimmo and Combs, 1992; Yagoda, 1993). Rogers was thus considered to

represent ordinary American people's voice in a public place. This representation was the source of the legitimacy of his public voice.

Representation as a source of the legitimization of a public voice is found in the collective voice of citizens that are expressed through collective action, public opinion polls, or voting. This mode of legitimization is also exemplified by what John Fiske and John Hartley (2003/1978) have called the "bardic" voice. The bardic voice, they have claimed, functions "as a social ritual, overriding individual distinctions, in which our culture engages in order to communicate with its collective self" (p. 64). Public communicators can become carriers of the bardic voice when they are considered to represent the voice of the collective self of a particular society and culture: the voice of the collective self that their audience may not be able to hear privately. Fiske and Hartley have argued that television performs this bardic function in modern society. The authority of television as the bardic voice depends on the fact that it occupies the center of modern culture: it "speaks to all members of our highly fragmented society" (p. 65). Nimmo and Combs (1992) have applied the model of the bardic voice to modern political commentators such as Mark Twain, Will Rogers, and Art Buchwald. These commentators, they have argued, are pundits who appeal to "popular sentiment rather than elite rationality" (p. 49). The Revolutionary press and the party press in the history of America are another type of the public voices that relied on the representative mode of legitimization. These two forms of the press legitimized their voice based on the belief that they represented the people or political factions (Nerone, 1994, 2006a). As the three types of public voice—a collective voice of citizens, the bardic voice, and the Revolutionary and the party press—show, representation is another mode of the legitimization of a public voice.

The modern journalistic voice is separated from other types of public voice because it hinges on both the representative and the transcendental modes of legitimization.¹⁴⁵ Even though the Revolutionary press and the party press were, in later years, replaced with the commercial press and professional journalism, modern journalists and news media have not lost the mode of legitimization on which the two forms of the press were dependent. Modern journalists and news media are still believed to represent the opinions, identities, and interests of ordinary citizens in public (see Carey, 1995; Schudson, 1999). This belief allows them to take the role of watchdog and to be the bastion of the people's right to know (Altschull, 1990). In particular, the

¹⁴⁵ For a succinct description of the modern journalism, see Carey (1999, 2002).

community press depends more on the representative mode of legitimization than the transcendental mode of legitimization (see Herbst, 1994; Jacobs, 2000; Janowitz, 1952; Squires, 2001).

Table 6-1 shows the typology of the different modes of the legitimization of public voices that I have explained. These modes are concerned with moral justifications of why a public voice is worthier of listening to than are individual voices of ordinary citizens. In this typology, there are two main ways to make a public voice more valuable than individual voices of ordinary citizens. The first is the transcendental mode of legitimization, in which carriers of a public voice are considered to hold a transcendental status. The second is the representative mode of legitimization, in which carriers of a public voice are regarded as representing the voice of ordinary citizens. Modern journalism hinges on the combination of these two modes of legitimization.

The transcendental and representative modes of legitimization are similar in the sense that the legitimacy of a public voice stems from the status of public communicators. In the two modes, a public voice is legitimized when the carriers of the voice are believed to have different statuses from that of ordinary citizens: in other words, when citizens accept the peremptory status of the public communicators who carry the voice.

The public voices of *simins*

Transcendental public communicators are people who are supposed to seek and tell truth—for example, religious, factual, rational, scientific, or technical truth. This communicative act of seeking and telling truth is, in its nature, opposed to a communicative act of judging political matters and telling such judgments (Arendt, 1977/1967, 2004/1990; Walzer, 1981; also see Oakeshott, 1991). In her essay explaining the antithesis between truth-tellers and politics, Hannah Arendt (1977/1967) argued that truth-tellers should take their stand “outside the political realm—outside the community to which we belong and the company of our peers” (p. 259). She called this standpoint the mode of *being alone*, which includes “the solitude of the philosopher, the isolation of the scientist and the artist, the impartiality of the historian and the judge, and the independence of the fact-finder, the witness, and the reporter” (p. 260). In this mode of *being alone*, according to Arendt, political commitment, adherence to a cause, and political judgment are not possible. If truth-tellers take a stand in a political controversy, their political arguments

would “look like some makeshift version” of truth that is “adapted to the needs of a particular people”: a version of truth that can be considered to be “provincial” or “ideological” (Walzer, 1981, pp. 396–397). Truth-tellers, therefore, are required to avoid taking a stand in a public controversy that comes from the multiplicity of voices and perspectives in the political realm (see Arendt, 1977/1967, 2004/1990; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; Walzer, 1981; Weber, 1970/1919).¹⁴⁶ Even when they take a stand in such a public controversy from truth-seekers’ perspective, they are advised to keep their truth—in other words, their thoughts and judgments—detached from a public controversy. If they attempt to persuade citizens of their truth by submitting it to citizens’ judgments, it would lose “its distinguishing quality” because “there is no visible hallmark that marks off truth from opinion” (Arendt, 2004/1990, p. 432). That is, this truth becomes “an opinion among opinions” (p. 432). As a result, it is likely to be “tried out, argued about, adopted in part, repudiated in part, or ignored” (Walzer, 1981, pp. 389–390). In short, when truth-tellers judge a particular public matter, express their judgments in public, and discuss their judgments with ordinary citizens, they turn into just opinion-makers. In other words, when truth-tellers engage in citizen polemicism, they lose their transcendental status. They, as a consequence, are transformed into ordinary citizens.

It thus is not surprising that transcendental public communicators are reluctant to take a position in a public controversy and to persuade ordinary citizens to accept their positions. In this respect, my informants are critical of traditional elite public communicators such as professional journalists, intellectuals, and specialists. These elite communicators, they said, are unwilling to provide their clear thoughts and judgments on which side is right or better in a public controversy. According to my informants, even when the elite communicators—in particular, pundits, intellectuals and specialists—express their thoughts and judgments about public matters, they speak to people in their own league rather than to ordinary citizens, in the two senses: first, that their thoughts and judgments are based on their own values that ordinary citizens do not share; second, that they express their thoughts and judgments with their own technical language. The elite communicators, therefore, are believed to impose their opinions on ordinary citizens, rather than persuading citizens to accept them.

¹⁴⁶ Arendt (1990) argued that the chasm between truth and political judgment was indicated by Socrates’ case. Socrates was not a truth-teller because he did not try to tell Athenian citizens philosophical truth. But he was a truth-oriented public communicator in the sense that his goal was to make Athenian citizens’ opinions more truthful. In engaging in dialogue with Athenian citizens, thus, Socrates did not take any political positions.

Elite public communicators' failure to take positions on public controversies and their disconnection from ordinary citizens are why my informants listen to citizen polemicists. My informants think that citizen polemicists provide what elite public communicators fail to provide. This idea was clearly expressed by a mid-level employee at a brokerage firm in his early forties, who has read citizen polemicists' messages for more than five years.¹⁴⁷ When he explained, in his interview, why he is willing to read citizen polemicists' messages, he said that these public communicators—in his terms, message posters on *Seoprise*—provide clear, insightful, and persuasive opinions on public matters (personal communication, November 1, 2007). The communicators, he also emphasized, express these opinions not in abstract, theoretical, and special language but in common people's language. He added that citizen polemicists are different from elite public communicators in terms of how they share their opinions with their audiences. The mid-level employee remarked: "While people who write columns in the newspaper behave like teachers, people who write on *Seoprise* behave like fellow students." By this remark, he implied that unlike elite public communicators, citizen polemicists attempt to persuade audiences to accept their opinions and to discuss public matters with audience members.

The communicative acts of citizen polemicists—that is, citizen polemicism—characterize their social status. As described above, by engaging in a communicative act of judging a particular political matter, offering such a judgment in public, and discussing it with citizens, public communicators—even truth-tellers—make themselves fellow citizens: in other words, common people as opposed to elite public communicators. In this sense, citizen polemicists become the citizen-public communicators, regardless of who they are, by the very act of citizen polemicism itself.

Citizen polemicists are ordinary citizens not only by the nature of their communicative act but also in their self-understanding and their readers' sense. My informants insisted in online messages and offline conversations that citizen polemicists are not different from their audience because these public communicators and audience are all ordinary citizens: in my informants' term, *simins*. This sense was articulated by a construction consulting engineer in his early fifties who has read citizen polemicists' postings for the past five years.¹⁴⁸ He said in his interview and off-line conversations that when he began to read citizen polemicists' online messages, he was

¹⁴⁷ He uses "Bupyeongsaram" as his nickname.

¹⁴⁸ He uses "Maengmaengy" as his online name.

surprised by the fact that there exist many citizens who are competent to critically examine contemporary affairs and public issues and to express their analytical and logical thoughts on public matters. He added that he had learned a lot from citizen polemicists' messages. Citizen polemicists, he nevertheless asserted, are ordinary citizens who are not different from him. The consulting engineer said, "They are people who just think deeper, write better, and have a stronger will to write than other ordinary people" (personal communication, October 16, 2007). In particular, he emphasized the importance of the "will to write" in making a distinction between citizen polemicists and other citizens. He said that he thought anyone could become a good writer—even someone not very skilled at writing—if that person would continue to write with the "will to write." In short, the construction consulting engineer believes that there is no fundamental difference, other than the "will to write," between citizen polemicists and himself.

This sense of the equal relationship between citizen polemicists and their audience was clearly supported by an owner of a special bi-weekly newspaper company in his late forties, who uses "Sadobaoro" as his online name. He began to engage in citizen polemicism in *Seoprise* in 2003 and was later a central figure in founding *Knowhow21* and renaming it *Moveon21*. In his interview, he asserted that there was no difference between himself and the members of his audience (personal communication, October 19, 2007). The newspaper owner argued that he was distinguished from members of his audience only by the will to post his opinions online. He said, "I just write better and like to write more than other ordinary citizens." He added: "I just present my claims [to fellow citizens]. I do not teach [them]." Like this newspaper owner, the citizen polemicists I met considered themselves to be ordinary citizens who voice their opinions on public matters.

The sense of citizen polemicists as ordinary citizens is also emphasized by Multuksimsong's remark in his interview. In answering my question of why he thinks people are willing to read his online messages, he said:

The characteristic of *Seoprise* is—[*Seoprise* visitors] seem to believe that there is something that they cannot find in essays of widely recognized experts.... [They] don't trust widely recognized experts.... That the same guys as me, the guys who have the same experience as mine and do not differ from me, write their candid stories is.... Experts don't write their candid thoughts because of certain reasons, [for example] their private interest, whereas the guys who are not different from

me write their candid opinions. And such opinions are reasonable. It seems to depend on a sense of kinship.... Through getting new ideas out of something very small and developing a way of regarding public matters from not so important issues, these guys provide their perspectives and views, which help [people] make sense of a society as a whole. Since [these perspectives and views] are provided by people who are free from money, fame, and power and who are not different from me, [*Seoprise* visitors] seem to trust them more. [*Seoprise* visitors] seem to have a feeling that they can also [provide such perspectives and views].... It's like pleasure that we may take when our neighbor wins a marathon. (personal communication, November 10, 2007)

This remark shows that citizen polemicists—specifically, messages posters on *Seoprise*—are considered to be like neighbors. The new public communicators are thus regarded as public communicators who inhabit the world of ordinary citizens. In this sense, citizen polemicists are not transcendental public communicators.

Moreover, the above remark reveals that online-talk participants—specifically, *Seoprise* visitors—are willing to listen to citizen polemicists not only because the public communicators provide reasonable and helpful opinions on public matters but also because the communicators are not “experts” but fellow citizens. By experts, Multuksimsong meant not just specialists but traditional elite public communicators including professional journalists, columnists, pundits, and intellectuals. According to him, online-talk participants consider citizen polemicists to be trustworthy public communicators because these public communicators are fellow citizens.

Multuksimsong provided two explanations of how the social status of ordinary citizen makes citizen polemicists trustworthy. First, online-talk participants feel a kinship with citizen polemicists because these public communicators are fellow citizens. Second, online-talk participants believe that citizen polemicists are unaffected by money and political power. As mentioned in chapter 5, online-talk participants distrust traditional elite public communicators because they think that the elite communicators seek to gain occupational or individual interests, rather than seek to serve the public good. Due to these private interests, these elite communicators are considered to sometimes distort factual truth and to fail to provide what they believe is right and reasonable with regard to public matters. Unlike the elite communicators, however, citizen polemicists do not need to worry about losing their material interests even if

they express their candid opinions, because they do not make a living from, seek careers in, or pursue their economic interests through citizen polemicism. In this respect, according to Multuksimsong's remark, citizen polemicists are considered to give voice to what they believe is right and reasonable with regard to public matters.

This idea of citizen polemicists as voluntary and nonprofessional public communicators is echoed by my other informants.¹⁴⁹ In their offline conversations and online messages, they stressed that these public communicators are *saengwhalins* 생활인. *Saengwhal* 생활 means *living* in Korean. More specifically, it refers to maintaining life by earning one's living and supporting one's family. *Saengwhalins* refer to people who engage in *saengwhal*: in other words, jobholders including housewives and part-time workers. When my informants called citizen polemicists *saengwhalins*, they wanted to emphasize that these communicators' discursive political participation is activity taken up in addition to their jobs and housework, which is the primary work for their lives. This understanding implies the sense that citizen polemicists do not engage in public communication for their own political and economic gain. In this sense, my informants believe that these public communicators are trustworthy.

Citizen polemicists, in brief, are considered to be both ordinary citizens, as opposed to elite politicians or elite public communicators, and *saengwhalins*, as contrasted with occupational political participants or occupational public communicators. This understanding of citizen polemicists stems from the fact that citizen polemicists are identified as *simins* who not just refer to ordinary citizens but represent, as mentioned in chapter 1, a South Korean imagination of common people as political subjects. This political concept contains not only the normative meaning of what *simins* should do, as described in chapter 5, but also the descriptive meaning of who *simins* are. In the latter meaning of *simin*, common people are regarded as political subjects who are *saengwhalins*—as socio-economic subjects—as well as bearers of civil and political rights.

¹⁴⁹ Not all citizen polemicists are free from profit motivation. A handful of citizen polemicists have sought careers in professional politics or commercial public communication after they had earned fame as citizen polemicists. Some citizen polemicists became professional politicians, aids to politicians, or political party officers. Another group of citizen polemicists have attempted to make their living by publishing their essays in commercial media such as newspapers or news sites. Still another group of citizen polemicists have tried to earn their living from managing web forums for political talk. A large portion of citizen polemicists, however, have neither made a living from nor sought careers in commercial public communication or professional politics. They engage in their own jobs. If one considers that citizen polemicism is not a source of enough income for making a living, it is no wonder that most citizen polemicists do not make a living from or seek careers in citizen polemicism. In fact, even citizen-polemicist-turned occupational public communicators do not make their living by engaging in citizen polemicism.

Yet, the meaning of *simin* is not limited to non-elite and non-occupational political subjects. The concept also carries the meaning of the political subjects whose public lives are disconnected from their socio-economic statuses and interests. This meaning of *simin* depends on the sense of *saengwhalin*. This sense implies not only that *simins* do not make a living from and seek careers in political participation, but also that they are socio-economically undifferentiated, though not homogeneous, political subjects. In reality, socio-economic positions of common people are not identical. They are different in terms of, for instance, occupation, income, wealth, class, the level of education, and social status. However, when common people are identified as *simins*, their different socio-economic positions are not attended to; in other words, their socio-economic identities are screened. No matter their socio-economic positions, they are equalized as *saengwhalins* in their public lives. Through the conception of *simin*, thus, common people become equals, not only in the sense that they bear identical social and political rights, but also in the sense that they are detached from their socio-economic positions. In the latter sense, *simins* are also regarded as political subjects who do not represent their own socio-economic identities in their public lives. Hence, when groups of common people are believed to seek their own socio-economic interests through political participation, they are no longer considered *simins*. In short, political subjects called *simins* are characterized by two features: first, they are not identified by their socio-economic positions; second, their political participation is not driven by their own socio-economic interests.

In the conception of *simin*, in sum, common people are equal political subjects, not only because they are all opposed to social and political elites, but also because they are all detached from their socio-economic positions. In addition, they are voluntary and disinterested political subjects, not only in the sense that they do not make a living from and seek careers in political participation, but also in the sense that they do not pursue the interests of their socio-economic positions through political participation. Their public lives are thus separated from their material lives. This separation is not just an essential characteristic of the political subjects called *simins*; it is also a source of the legitimacy of their political participation. In South Korea, this model of political subjects was embodied by the common people who took to the streets for democratization under the authoritarian regime.

Online-talk participants—specifically, citizen polemicists and their audiences—identify themselves and other participants primarily as *simins*.¹⁵⁰ They thus regard themselves as equals, regardless of their socio-economic positions.¹⁵¹ Their discursive political participation is not believed to serve their private material interests. From this view, citizen polemicists are regarded as voluntary and non-professional communicators as well as non-transcendental ones; and their claims about public matters are considered to come from what they believe is right and reasonable, rather than to represent their socio-economic positions. As a result, their voices are considered to be trustworthy; and their claims are regarded as discourses oriented to the public good, rather than propaganda for conflicting interests or communicative practices for making a living and enhancing their careers.

The rise of the sense of online-talk participants as *simins*—in other words, the rise of the association between online-talk participants as new political actors and *simin* as an existing political conception or identity—does not just stem from the belief that these new actors do not seek their private material interests through discursive political participation. This sense was initially promoted by public discourse in which the Internet is described as a technology for participatory democracy and Internet-users as citizens or netizens who are willing to take part in politics. This discourse was imported from America and spread by the mainstream news media in South Korea, when the Internet was introduced to the country in the 1990s. This public discourse—which was popular in the early Internet age—led online-talk participants to be combined with the image of democratic participants. This imaginary combination contributed to viewing online-talk participants primarily as *simins* in South Korea. The technological characteristic of the Internet is another factor that leads online-talk participants to be identified as *simins*. By hiding offline identities of online-talk participants, the Internet makes it difficult for them to be identified by terms connected with their socio-economic positions, rather than as *simin*. In short, the rise of the sense of online-talk participants as *simins* results from the association among conceptual, cognitive, discursive, and technological factors.

¹⁵⁰ In South Korea, not all types of political participants are recognized as *simins*. When political participants can be easily identified as and grouped by their socio-economic positions, they are identified as interest groups representing these positions—for example, working class, college students, or a specific generation—rather than *simin*.

¹⁵¹ Indeed, the online-talk participants whom I met in my research engage in various jobs: for example, white-collar employees, blue-collar workers, contract workers, part-time workers, small business owners, the owners of small companies, school teachers, professors, college and graduate students, housewives, social movement activists, pastors, real estate agents, medical doctors, pharmacists, and police officers. They, nonetheless, are not divided according to economic class or social status. They are all regarded as people who hold an equal status of *simin*.

Even though citizen polemicists are considered common people who are identified as *simins*, they are not believed to be representatives of *simins*. The citizen polemicists I met emphasized that, rather than expressing common feelings or opinions of *simins*, they try to give voice to what they themselves have in mind: more specifically, to their individual thoughts and judgments that are formed through their reasoning and experience. They hope that their opinions will be agreed to and accepted by other *simins*. But my informants said that their opinions may differ from the opinions that the majority of *simins* share. In my informants' views, citizen polemicists are thus public communicators who voice their individual opinions, which can be accepted by other *simins* or may correspond to common feelings or opinions of *simins*.

The voice of the citizen polemicist is similar to the mode of the academic voice that sociologist Howard Becker (1986) has favored. He has described his favorite mode—in his term, *persona*—of the academic voice as follows:

We are just plain folks who emphasize our similarity to ordinary people, rather than the differences. We may know a few things others don't, but it's nothing special. "Shucks, you'd of thought the same as me if you'd just been there to see what I seen. It's just that I had the time or took the trouble to be there, and you didn't or couldn't, but let me tell you about it." Something like that. (Becker, 1986, pp. 36–37)

Like carriers of this academic voice, citizen polemicists do not have a special status as carriers of a public voice. In contrast with carriers of the transcendental public voice, they inhabit the same world where ordinary people live. Yet, the voice of the citizen polemicist is not a representative public voice. Citizen polemicists voice their individual thoughts and judgments about public matters, rather than representing common people. They are thus neither transcendental nor representative public communicators.

A common sense-oriented public voice

Online-talk participants, as shown in the previous section, believe that citizen polemicists are trustworthy because these public communicators do not pursue their private interests from engaging in public communication. But this belief falls short of making the communicators' voices legitimate. Since citizen polemicists take stands on public controversies, their voices are considered to be partial, from the beginning, regardless of what stands they take. In addition,

since they are ordinary citizens who do not have transcendental or representative status as public communicators, their claims about public matters—not only in principle but also in their self-understanding—cannot be free from their subjective views, limited knowledge, and incorrect or insufficient information. In this sense, these new communicators’ voices do not differ from individual citizens’ voices that convey their own private opinions.

When I asked my informants about this potential partiality and defectiveness of citizen polemicists’ thoughts and judgments, they emphasized that these new communicators’ claims are evaluated and agreed upon by other citizens. My informants believe that citizen agreement—in practice, audience agreement—can denote the validity of claims about public matters. In fact, the online-talk participants I investigated often consider the strength of claims to be indicated by the number of audience members who assent to the claims. This belief of audience agreement as an indicator of validity relies on the idea that this agreement is grounded in common sense.

Most citizen polemicists I met remarked that their thoughts and judgments about public matters depended on *sangsik* 상식, which refers to general knowledge and common sense in Korean. By this remark, these citizen polemicists meant that their claims did not hinge on esoteric knowledge, intellectual giftedness, or specialized training. In their views, their claims are based on general knowledge, which ordinary citizens can gain if interested in the issues. They thus consider their claims to be opinions that fellow citizens can also form if the citizens put some thought on political matters. By mentioning *sangsik*, they also wanted to emphasize that their claims are neither irrational nor idiosyncratic because the claims are commonsensical.

In general, the term *common sense* carries two interrelated meanings.¹⁵² First, it signifies practical sense and sound judgment that ordinary people make of reality in everyday life. Second, it means mental and intellectual ability to make such practical sense and sound judgment of reality. This ability consists of shared beliefs and values, plain and conventional knowledge, and shared ways of thinking that serve as a guide for such practical sense and sound judgment. Common sense, therefore, refers to common people’s prudential and inter-subjective sense and

¹⁵² For the concept of common sense, see Black (1979), Fletcher (1984), Forguson (1989), Geertz (1975), Kelley (1992), Nitecki (1987), Page (2001), and Rescher (2005).

judgment or such a way of thinking.¹⁵³ Common sense is believed to be reliable in understanding ordinary situations and judging everyday problems.

In my informants' views, common sense can serve as a guide for sound and impartial judgment not only of reality in everyday life but also regarding public matters. They thus believe that if thoughts and judgments about public matters are commonsensical, these opinions can be considered to be sensible, reasonable, and nonsubjective. From this perspective, they regard common sense as something like a reference point by which thoughts and judgments about public matters are evaluated and judged. My informants also believe that common sense is a foundation of agreement among citizens who have different opinions on public matters. In short, they regard common sense as a source of the validity of claims about public matters.

The significance of common sense in online political talk is revealed by the fact that my informants divide online-talk participants into two different types of people: commonsensical people and noncommonsensical people. When they talked about other online-talk participants in offline conversations or interviews, they usually mentioned whether the participants are commonsensical. This sense of the classification of online-talk participants was clearly expressed by a businessman in his middle forties, who uses Mong-Ah as his nickname. He was one of the early visitors to *Seoprise*; and he was also a central citizen polemicist in *Seoprise* and *Knowhow21*. In his interview, he separated online-talk participants into "people who think commonsensically" and "people who do not" (personal communication, October 27, 2007). Then he emphasized that commonsensical people are central to democracy-enhancing political talk.

When I asked Mong-Ah about the nature of commonsensical people, he answered: "The first [characteristic] is common people; and the second is people who try to make rational judgment [on public matters] in their own ways." By "common people," according to his explanation, he meant people who do not earn a living from, seek careers in, or pursue their economic interests through political participation; in short, he meant political subjects described as *simins* in the previous section. In his view, thus, their ultimate goal of discursive political participation is not to promote a political group or a public figure. Rather, they try to voice what they believe is right or reasonable with regard to public matters, and they want to share their

¹⁵³ For a view of common sense as impartial sense and judgment, see Arendt (1977/1961, 1982), Rescher (2005), and Rosenfeld (2008). For Arendt's notion of common sense, in particular, see Beiner (1982, 1983), Norris (1996), and Wellmer (1998/1985).

views with fellow citizens. In this respect, according to Mong-Ah, common people can be commonsensical judges of public matters.

While Mong-Ah's first characteristic of commonsensical people—detachment from private material interest—is related to the condition for commonsensical thinking, his second characteristic is concerned with the nature of commonsensical thinking. He considered common sense to be a rational way of thinking, rather than common assumption and beliefs. In his interview, in fact, he used “rational” and “commonsensical” interchangeably. But Mong-Ah does not believe that commonsensical people are entirely logical and consistent. Rather, in his view, commonsensical people are characterized by the fact that they regard rational thinking as a guide for practical sense and sound judgment and try to judge public matters rationally.

This view of common sense as a rational way of thinking is widely echoed by my other informants. According to them, rational thinking means to evaluate whether thoughts and judgments about public matters are reasonable—specifically, well-grounded and consistent—and to accept claims that are more reasonable, rather than less reasonable.¹⁵⁴ They believe that humans have a capacity to judge which claims are more reasonable. This rationality, they also think, should be considered to be a main guide for good sense and sound judgment about public matters. In this view, my informants regard logical reasoning, factual ground, and consistency as central standards for evaluating citizen polemicists or their claims. In fact, many critical comments on citizen polemicists' claims are centered on whether the claims are well-founded and consistent. When citizen polemicists or their audience members are unwilling to accept a more reasonable opinion than their favorite ones, these online-talk participants are described as “irrational” or “non-commonsensical.” In my informants' views, in short, rational thinking is not only central to common sense but also regarded as a commonsensical way of thinking, not in the sense—as Mong-Ah's above remark shows—that ordinary people are fully rational in thinking of and judging public matters, but in the sense that these people consider rational thinking to be better than the other ways of thinking and try to be rational in thinking of and judging public matters.

In the sense that rational thinking is central to common sense, this term is distinguished from *vox populi*, which means sentiment and opinion that common people share. The latter

¹⁵⁴ For this relationship between common sense and rationality, see Forguson (1989), Paine (2003/1776), Rescher (2005), and Rosenfeld (2008).

includes common people's collective emotions and irrational beliefs, which are not considered, by my informants, to be commonsensical. Unlike *vox populi*, common sense refers to sense and judgment formed through rational or commonsensical thinking. In other words, it is sense and judgment shared by not just common but also commonsensical people.

In the traditional understanding of common sense, however, commonsensical thinking is distinguished from scholarly, expert, or scientific thinking, because, unlike the latter ways of thinking, the former is considered to lack depth of understanding and rigor of thinking (see Black, 1979; Fletcher, 1984; Geertz, 1975; Kelley, 1992; Nitecki, 1987). In this view, common sense is characterized as sense and judgment that not fully enlightened people have in common. That is, the voice of common sense is not the idealized voice of reason. Common sense, thus, is not considered to be reliable in judging public matters.

My informants are acutely aware of this alleged limitation of common sense. But they think that deep understanding and rigorous thinking are not always necessary for understanding and judging public matters because, in many cases, common sense is good enough to make sensible and practical judgments. As described above, moreover and more importantly, they believe that common sense is a basic form of rationally understanding and judging public matters: in other words, it is a basic level of rational thinking, on which even scholarly, expert, or scientific thinking is founded.¹⁵⁵ Hence, if elite public communicators' claims about public matters are not commonsensical, these claims are neither reasonable nor impartial.

From this perspective, common sense is not fundamentally different from scholarly, expert, or scientific thinking, because all are based on a rational way of thinking. In my informants' views, the difference between these two types of thinking lies mainly in the amount and depth of information and knowledge. My informants, however, believe that although ordinary citizens lack information and knowledge, these citizens, if commonsensical, can still make sound judgment of which claims are more reasonable. They, furthermore, think that the Internet reduces the gap in information and knowledge between ordinary citizens and elite people.¹⁵⁶ The Internet makes it much easier for ordinary citizens to gain the information and knowledge that are necessary for understanding and judging public matters. The Internet also

¹⁵⁵ For this view of common sense, see Rescher (2005), and Rosenfeld (2008).

¹⁵⁶ When I asked Mong-Ah whether he, in engaging in citizen polemicism, regards himself as an expert or an ordinary citizen, he challenged my question, rather than trying to answer it. He argued that my question does not make sense because in the digital age, experts cannot be distinguished from ordinary citizens any more (personal communication, October 27, 2007).

makes it possible for ordinary citizens to share their information and knowledge with fellow citizens. According to my informants, in addition, ordinary citizens can be better judges of contemporary affairs and public issues or of different opinions on these public matters than scholars, experts, or scientists, in the sense that, unlike these elite people, ordinary citizens are unaffected by their private interests. Common sense, my informants believe, can thus be a source of the authority of a public voice.¹⁵⁷

That the legitimacy of citizen polemicists' voices is grounded in common sense discloses the nature of the equality between these public communicators and their audience members. Common sense can be grasped by any person with mental capacity—specifically, the rudimentary ability to think and judge—and social experience (see Forguson, 1989; Geertz, 1975; Rescher, 2005). Nothing more than maturity and experience, therefore, is required for learning common sense. All mature people inhabiting a common world, thus, are believed to be able to judge reality sensibly, reasonably, and impartially. Common sense, in short, is based on the idea that humans are subjects who can make rational and nonsubjective judgments of reality in everyday life (see Forguson, 1989; Rescher, 2005). In my informants' views, humans can also make rational and nonsubjective judgments of public matters if they are, in doing so, free from their own private political and economic interests. As shown in the previous section, citizen polemicists and their audience members are identified as *simins*, whose public lives are detached from their own socio-economic lives. Unlike private interest-seeking participants in public communication, therefore, these online-talk participants are considered to be able to make commonsensical judgment of public matters. In this view, the online-talk participants I met regard themselves and their audience members as subjects who can make sensible, rational, and impartial judgments of public matters, rather than as people who are to be educated, enlightened, or informed. When citizen polemicists and their audience members are equalized into *simins*, their equality is grounded not only in the fact that they are all ordinary citizens and *saengwhalins*, but also in the belief that they are all subjects who can think of and judge public matters independently, impartially, and rationally (see chapter 5 for the rise of self-understanding as subjects who think of and judge public matters).

From this perspective, my informants believe that if a claim about a public matter is reasonable and impartial, it can be understood and accepted by other citizens. Based on this

¹⁵⁷ Political scientist Don Herzog (1998) has called this authority of a public voice “epistemic authority.”

belief, as mentioned at the outset of this section, my informants consider citizen agreement—in practice, audience agreement—to be an indicator showing that a claim about public matters is commonsensical or valid. In this understanding, it is assumed that audience agreement is formed through a commonsensical way of thinking, rather than by a collection of private preferences or collective emotion.

A discussion-dependent public voice

As described in the previous section, anyone with experience and maturity is believed to be able to understand and judge public matters rationally and nonsubjectively: in other words, commonsensically. In reality, however, not everyone does. According to my informants, private interests, prejudices, obstinate personalities, or partisan emotions are barriers to a commonsensical way of thinking. Partisan emotions, in particular, are regarded as a main factor that makes many online-talk participants fail to think about and judge public matters commonsensically. (This is not surprising if one considers that, as described in chapter 5, citizen polemicists are motivated by their emotional feelings with regard to public issues and considered to present themselves by their judgments about public matters. When they judge public matters and post their judgments online, they have already formed emotional attachment to these judgments and have come to regard the judgments as representing themselves in public.)

This view of partisan emotion is manifested by the fact that unlike private interest-seeking, prejudiced, or stubborn online-talk participants, partisan emotion-driven participants gained a specific name: *bba* 바바.¹⁵⁸ This is a slang term that refers, in a contemptuous way, to emotional and uncritical supporters of a cause, a political party, a social group, a political leader, or a public figure.¹⁵⁹ In online political talk, specifically, *bbas* mean online-talk participants who

¹⁵⁸ The term *bba* comes from a slang term, *obba-budae* 오빠부대, which began to be used, in recent years, to refer to a group of teenage girls who are fanatical about entertainment and sports celebrities. The meaning of *obba-budae* is very similar to that of the American term bobby-soxers, which was coined in the 1940s. In South Korea, the term *obba-budae* originated in the fact that the teenage girls call their idols *obbas* 오빠. *Obba* was originally the term used by women to refer to their older brothers or cousins. In contemporary Korean, however, *obba* has come to be used as a term that young women call not only their older brothers and cousins but also their male friends or boyfriends who are older than they are. *Budae* 부대 means a troop or a group in Korean. The term *obba-budae*, later, was replaced with a more general term *bba*, which was made up to refer not only to teenage girls who are crazy about entertainment and sports celebrities but also to any types of people who are fanatical about any objects such as public figures, political groups, or social causes.

¹⁵⁹ The term *bba* is sometimes used to refer not only to a specific type of supporters, emotional and uncritical supporters, but also to general supporters. This usage of *bba* stemmed, in part, from the name-calling technique that many online-talk participants call their opponents—those who take an opposite position on a public matter—*bbas*.

are, in judging public matters, overwhelmed by their partisan emotions and, in practicing citizen polemicism, appeal to fellow partisans' partisan emotions.¹⁶⁰

In their online messages and interviews, many online-talk participants I met distinguished citizen polemicists into “commonsensical” or “rational” communicators and *bbas*, and they were vehemently critical of the latter type of citizen polemicists. They often described these partisan emotion-driven communicators in extremely negative terms: for example, “permanent, political, voluntary slaves” (Kim Kyung Sook, 2006) or “a cancer-like existence that is inimical to social development” (Multuksimsong, 2007, Aug. 17). As these expressions imply, my informants believe that *bbas* carry an illegitimate public voice.

These partisan emotion-driven communicators are exemplified by the message posters—called Hwang-*bbas*—who supported, actively and emotionally, Hwang Woo Suk on *Seoprise* during the Dr. Hwang scandal.¹⁶¹ This scandal, as introduced in chapter 4, began with *PD Su-cheop*'s report on November 22, 2005. It remained a main controversy in South Korea until the first half of 2006. During this period, many visitors to *Seoprise* continued to talk about the scandal. This talk drew a large number of new members—many of whom had seldom participated in online political talk before the scandal started—to the web forum. In particular, supporters of Hwang rapidly increased on *Seoprise*. The Dr. Hwang scandal, therefore, overwhelmed talk on the forum, marginalizing discussion and debate about other political issues. In addition, citizen polemicists supporting Hwang usually gained support from a larger number of the forum visitors than did critics of Hwang. People who were disapproving of these changes on the web forum said derisively that *Seoprise* had become *Hwang-prise*.

On *Seoprise*, however, Hwang supporters could hardly avoid, from the start, criticism by people—like Multuksimsong—who were critical of Hwang during the scandal. These Hwang critics challenged the Hwang supporters' interpretations of and judgments on this scandal. This

In responding to this repetitive verbal attack, quite a few online-talk participants began to call, in a self-respectful way, themselves *bbas* in the meaning of faithful supporters. In this sense, thus, *bbas* are contrasted with objectors of a cause, political party, social group, or a public figure—who are called *ggas* 7ㅓ in South Korea's online political talk—rather than with commonsensical, rational, or critical online-talk participants. The meaning of *gga* is close to that of *hater* or *h8ter* in American online terms.

¹⁶⁰ The meaning of *bba* is similar to that of *bot*—which is a shortened form of robot—that American online-talk participants use. For example, emotional and uncritical supporters of Barack Obama are called *Obama-bots* in American online political talk. In South Korean term, these supporters of Obama can be called *Obama-bbas*.

¹⁶¹ For a detailed description of Hwang-supporters during the Dr. Hwang scandal, see Kim (2009).

challenge led to discussions and debates about the scandal. These communicative interactions often turned into emotional conflicts.

After the Dr. Hwang scandal had broken in late 2005, the stem cell research by Hwang Woo Suk and his research team was investigated by a Seoul National University committee, many other individual biology researchers, and the Public Prosecutor's office of South Korea. These close examinations revealed the scientific misconduct of Hwang and his research team. As a result, their papers published in the academic journal *Science* were retracted; Hwang was dismissed from his university; and he was indicted for fraud, embezzlement, and a breach of bioethics law.

As the Dr. Hwang scandal grew in this way, the number of active Hwang supporters on *Seoprise* dropped. The remaining active supporters were limited to people who were emotionally bonded to Hwang. These emotional supporters of Hwang continued, on the web forum, to defend Hwang and to blame his critics. They insisted that Hwang was being persecuted by people who could gain benefit from his fall. In April 2006, as mentioned in chapter 2, *Seoprise* established its sub-forum designed for discussion about the Dr. Hwang scandal, which is called *Hwang-To-Bang*.¹⁶² The emotional Hwang supporters, thus, began to convene on this sub-forum. Since passionate Hwang supporters prevailed on *Hwang-To-Bang*, messages supporting Hwang almost always drew, on this sub-forum, support from a large number of people, regardless of whether claims presented in these messages were commonsensical.

Hwang-To-Bang, nevertheless, could not be free of criticism by Hwang critics. On this sub-forum, scores of Hwang critics, including Multuksim-song, continued to criticize Hwang supporters, leading to heated debates and hostile conflicts between the two groups. These debates and conflicts included ridicule and insult as well as rebuke. In these critical and hostile communicative interactions, the Hwang critics blasted Hwang supporters not only for understanding and judging the Dr. Hwang scandal noncommonsensically but also for being unwilling to engage in discussion and debate with their critics. The Hwang critics argued that “Hwang-bbas” were trying to gain assent from fellow partisans by appealing to their partisan emotion, rather than trying to justify their claims and to persuade non-partisans and critical audience members by arguing with them about their claims. This criticism is not surprising since,

¹⁶² *Hwang-To-Bang* is a shortened form of *Hwang Woo-Suk Toron Bang*, which means “the room for discussion about Hwang Woo-Suk.”

as described in chapter 4, arguing with their audiences—in particular, critical audience members—is considered to be what citizen polemicists are supposed to do. The Hwang critics insisted that if “Hwang-*bbas*” were unwilling to present reasons—in particular, logical and factual grounds—supporting their claims and to justify their claims by responding to critiques, they should not have posted their claims on a web forum like *Seoprise*.

In the Hwang critics’ view, engaging in discussion and debate does not mean just to exchange arguments, critiques, and responses. The goal of this critical interaction should be to seek better arguments together with fellow citizens who have different opinions. Citizen polemicists, thus, are not just required to give reasons for their claims and to defend their claims from critiques; they are also expected, if they cannot defend their claims from criticism, to admit fallacies in and limitations of their claims and to accept better claims. The Hwang critics expressed these requirements for citizen polemicism as “responsibilities that people should take for writing their claims in a public place,” “the basic rules of conversation,” or “the attitudes required for a web forum.” In criticizing, ridiculing, or insulting the Hwang supporters, the Hwang critics emphasized repetitively that “Hwang-*bbas*” failed to meet these requirements in practicing citizen polemicism.¹⁶³

The Hwang critics requested the Hwang supporters to engage in discussion and debate with critics, not just because they thought this critical interaction is the duty of citizen polemicists, but also because they believed this communicative action would contribute to separating commonsensical claims from noncommonsensical claims and to filtering out noncommonsensical elements of claims. The Hwang critics contended that the Hwang supporters’ claims lacked reasonable grounds and depended on biased and subjective views. In responding to this criticism, the Hwang supporters emphasized that the validity of their claims was demonstrated by audience agreement. The Hwang critics, however, argued that audience agreement on *Hwang-To-Bang* resulted from the Hwang supporters’ partisan emotion rather than their commonsensical judgments. According to the Hwang critics, audience agreement could not

¹⁶³ After the Hwang critics established their own web forum, *Zzizil.net*, in May 2007 (see chapter 1), some of the Hwang supporters began to post their messages on this forum. In responding to these Hwang supporters’ postings, some members of *Zzizil.net* argued that “Hwang-*bbas*” should not be allowed to post their messages on this forum. In justifying this argument, they emphasized that “Hwang-*bbas*” were unwilling to engage in critical interaction with critics. Yet, not all members of the forum agreed with the argument for excluding Hwang-*bbas*. These objectors to the exclusion of Hwang-*bbas* claimed that *Zzizil.net* should be open to anyone, even “Hwang-*bbas*.” But they assented to the idea that message posters should engage in discussion and debate with critics.

serve, on *Hwang-To-Bang*, as an indicator of commonsensical claims because partisans supporting Hwang outnumbered Hwang critics and non-partisans on the sub-forum. The Hwang critics believed that if the Hwang supporters attempted to offer reasons supporting their claims and to justify their claims by responding to critiques, the fallacies in and limitations of their claims would be disclosed. The Hwang critics also thought that if the Hwang supporters admitted these problems with their claims and accepted better claims, their claims would be transformed into or replaced with more reasonable and more impartial claims. In short, the Hwang critics' demand for engaging in discussion and debate with critical audience members is based on the belief that this critical interaction would result in the rise of a commonsensical voice.

In the Hwang critics' view, discussion and debate with fellow citizens serve as the linchpin of a commonsensical public voice. Since citizen polemicists' claims are exposed to this critical interaction, these claims can be distinguished from individual citizens' private opinions and professional politicians' propaganda, both of which are wide open to inaccurate or insufficient information, limited knowledge, or biased and subjective views. According to the Hwang critics, since the Hwang supporters do not engage in discussion and debate with critics, their claims are no more than subjective opinions or propaganda.

This view of *bbas* is echoed by my other informants. They are extremely critical of *bbas*. They, like the Hwang critics, consider *bbas* to be illegitimate public communicators, not only because these partisan emotion-driven communicators are noncommonsensical, but also because these communicators are unwilling to engage in discussion and debate with their critics. My informants believe that if *bbas*' claims are exposed to critical communicative process with fellow citizens, noncommonsensical problems of their claims would be revealed and filtered out.

Similarly, the Hwang critics' view of critical interaction with fellow citizens as the linchpin of a commonsensical public voice is also widely shared by my other informants. They, like the Hwang critics, regard critical interaction as a communicative process that includes giving reasons for one's claims, listening to critics, justifying one's claims by responding to critiques, and accepting better claims. My informants also consider critical interaction to result in the rise of commonsensical voice. They, thus, believe that if individual citizens' claims go through this communicative process, these claims can be considered to be commonsensical. In this view, critical interaction is crucial in making the voice of the citizen polemicist a valuable public

voice.¹⁶⁴ In explaining why their favorite citizen polemicists or web forums are better than others, my informants consistently emphasized the role of critical interaction. They argued that their favorite citizen polemicists engage in discussion and debate with their critics. They also claimed that there is critical interaction on their favorite web forums. For my informants, in short, arguing with fellow citizens—in particular, critical citizens—is not only an essential part of citizen polemicism but also what makes the voice of the citizen polemicist legitimate.

The view of critical interaction as a source of legitimacy was supported even by most Hwang supporters who participated actively in online talk on *Hwang-To-Bang*. They did not agree with the Hwang critics' argument that they avoided discussion and debate with their critics. In responding to this criticism, they contended that most messages posted by the Hwang critics on *Hwang-To-Bang* were mockery rather than rational criticism. The Hwang supporters argued that if the Hwang critics posted rational critiques based on logical and factual grounds, they were willing to engage in discussion and debate with the Hwang critics. Many Hwang supporters, however, agreed with the Hwang critics' view that critical interaction makes the voice of citizen polemicists legitimate. This is demonstrated by the remark of a Hwang supporter—a businessman in his late forties—who is one of the central figures in *Hwang-To-Bang*.¹⁶⁵ In a message posted on January 22, 2007, he enumerated the conditions in which "*Hwang-To-Bang* would die or be put into a vegetative state." One of these conditions is "when [the Hwang supporters and critics] avoid debate."

That discussion and debate with critical citizens are foundations of the legitimacy of citizen polemicists' voice is clearly demonstrated by the case of mid-ranked police official Juklimnupil, who was mentioned in chapters 4 and 5. When he began to post messages supporting police officers' viewpoints on *Seoprise*, some members of this web forum complained that his messages were propaganda for the police. For these complainants, Juklimnupil was not a legitimate public communicator because he was a police officer and also because he supported the viewpoint of the police in his messages. This complaint is not wrong in the transcendent or representative modes of legitimization of a public voice. On *Seoprise*, however, the police official's occupation and viewpoints were not considered to be sufficient

¹⁶⁴ This view was clearly expressed by citizen polemicist and housewife Kim Kyung Sook, who was mentioned in chapter 4. In the remark quoted in that chapter, she said: If citizen polemicists "do not respond to rational critiques and questions, I think it shows that they consider their own messages to be garbage. As long as I do not need to get certain information from their messages, I do not read them."

¹⁶⁵ He uses "Canadian Rocky" as his nickname.

evidence to demonstrate that his messages were propaganda. His critics were asked to show, through persuasive and logical critiques of his arguments, that his arguments were wrong. As long as Juklimnupil tried to justify his arguments by responding to his critics, he was considered a legitimate citizen polemicist. Despite his occupation, in fact, he was regarded as an exemplary citizen polemicist on *Seoprise*, because he not only made logical and persuasive claims but also justified his claims through engaging in discussion and debate with his critics. Juklimnupil's case shows that the legitimacy of the voice of citizen polemicists lies in the process of critical communicative interaction, not in the status of the public communicators.

Conclusion

The voice of the citizen polemicist is considered a legitimate public voice because the voice brings common sense to political communication. According to citizen polemicists and their audience members, common sense refers not just to sense and judgment that common people share, but to reasonable and nonsubjective sense and judgment about public matters that ordinary people can understand and accept. In this view, central to common sense is rational thinking, which means to evaluate whether claims about public matters are reasonable—specifically, well-grounded and consistent—and to accept claims that are more, rather than less, reasonable. Common sense, thus, does not mean unreflective sense and judgment that are based on ordinary people's common assumptions and beliefs.

From this perspective, the voice of common sense is not identical with *vox populi*. While the latter refers to sentiment and opinion that common people share, the former means sense and judgment that not just common but also commonsensical people share. The voice of common sense is also separated from the idealized voice of reason. The latter can be regarded as sense and judgment made by fully enlightened people, who have deep knowledge and rigorously rational thoughts. Common sense is sense and judgment that can be agreed to by common people who try to make reasonable and impartial judgments of public matters. In this regard, common sense is reason-oriented, though not enlightened, sense and judgment. Although a commonsensical public voice is neither *vox populi* nor the idealized voice of reason, my informants believe that it can be a reliable source of the validity of claims about public matters.

The voice of the citizen polemicist is believed to provide commonsensical claims about public matters. But this does not mean that citizen polemicists are bearers of common sense. In

fact, their claims are not considered to be necessarily commonsensical. In my informants' views, what makes citizen polemicists' claims commonsensical is the process of communication through which these public communicators' claims are criticized and challenged by critics, justified and defended by themselves, and evaluated and agreed to by other common people who are identified as *simins*. In short, critical interaction and *simin* agreement—in practice, audience agreement—are regarded as sources of a commonsensical voice.

That audience agreement is a source of a commonsensical voice stems from the fact that citizen polemicists and their audience members regard themselves and fellow online-talk participants as subjects who can make commonsensical judgment of public matters. From this self-understanding, it is assumed that if citizen polemicists' claims are commonsensical, their claims would be agreed to by fellow online-talk participants.

These online-talk participants' self-understanding—as subjects that judge public matters commonsensically—depends on their political identity as *simin*. By nature, humans are believed to have the intellectual and mental capability to judge everyday issues reasonably and nonsubjectively. In online-talk participants' views, humans are able to judge not only everyday issues but also public matters reasonably and nonsubjectively unless they seek their private interests in doing so. In the conception of *simin*, common people are regarded not only as subjects who bear civil and political rights, but also as political subjects who do not make a living from, seek careers in, or pursue their private economic and political interests through political participation. That is, *simins* are voluntary and disinterested political participants who are, in their public lives, free from their private interests. Their judgments about public matters, thus, are not considered to represent their socio-economic identities or material interests; instead, their political judgments are believed to come from what they believe is right or reasonable.

Yet, audience agreement does not necessarily demonstrate that citizen polemicists' claims are commonsensical, because this agreement may result from audience members' partisan emotions rather than commonsensical thinking. Citizen polemicists and their audience, thus, think that audience agreement should hinge on discussion and debate between citizen polemicists and their critics. These critical interactions, they believe, can filter out fallacies and limitations—for example, illogical, factually erroneous, inconsistent, or subjective problems—that citizen polemicists' claims may have. In this view, discussion and debate serve as the linchpin of a commonsensical public voice.

In traditional modes of legitimization, public voices have gained their legitimacy from a transcendental or representative status that the voices' carriers hold. But citizen polemicists have neither transcendental nor representative status. These public communicators are considered to be equal with their audience members. The legitimacy of citizen polemicists' voices is vested not in their status as public communicators but in the communicative interaction to which their claims are exposed: specifically, the communicative process of being discussed and evaluated by their audience members, which is believed to result in the rise of a commonsensical voice.

In this communication-based mode of legitimization, citizen polemicists' voices can come closer to the voice of common sense, not just when they engage in communicative interactions with their audiences, but also when their audience members have various stances on public matters, voice critical opinions on claims about public matters, and make commonsensical judgments of public matters. In reality, however, citizen polemicists' audiences always fall short of this ideal model of audience. Each of these actual audiences has a limited range of stances. In many cases, furthermore, citizen polemicists and the majority of their audience members have similar viewpoints toward the public matters that they discuss. Such dominant viewpoints influence these online-talk participants' judgments about which claims are commonsensical. In fact, claims based on opposite standpoints are often regarded as noncommonsensical or irrational claims; as a result, these claims are ignored or ridiculed, rather than discussed. The critical communicative interactions between citizen polemicists and their audiences, thus, are confined largely to issues that do not conflict with their common standpoints. Due to these actual conditions, citizen polemicists' voices tend to come closer to what they and their audiences believe is a commonsensical voice, rather than to the voice of common sense.

In the eyes of citizen polemicists' audience, nevertheless, these public communicators' voices do not merely carry their partisan views. Rather, their voices are believed to be oriented to common sense, not least because they convey the preferred opinions of their audience members—many online-talk participants consider their favorite opinions to be commonsensical—and, also, because they engage in critical communicative interactions in a public place. Even though citizen polemicists and their audiences usually have similar points of view, these online-talk participants' opinions are far from uniform. When new public issues emerge, they do not share, from the beginning, the same stance on these issues. Even when citizen polemicists and the majority of their audience members come to have the same positions

on the public matters that they discuss, these people do not have the same opinion on every detailed issue with regard to the public matters. They, moreover, do not share the same standpoints on other public issues. This difference in standpoint brings about discussion and debate when a new public issue emerges. In addition, citizen polemicists and their audiences do not always ignore or ridicule opinions based on different viewpoints. They often try to argue against different viewpoint-based opinions—in particular, when these opinions are posted in the form of thoughtful argument—because they think they should justify their stances by responding to critical opinions. These responses sometimes lead to discussions and debates between online-talk participants with different viewpoints, although these discussions and debates often turn into hostile communicative interactions. In short, since citizen polemicists and their audiences are not only open to different opinions but also oriented to critical interaction, a collision of different opinions often takes place in the process of the communicative interactions between these online-talk participants.

In this collision, not only are citizen polemicists' claims criticized and challenged but the problems and limitations of their claims are often revealed. As a consequence, from time to time these claims are modified or refuted. This process of the communicative interaction, moreover, is visible to every audience member. In this respect, the voices of citizen polemicists are clearly distinguished from the voices of traditional elite public communicators and the voices of private and subjective opinions, because the latter types of public voices are not exposed to critical communicative interaction. This hallmark of citizen polemicists' voices leads their audience to believe that they deliver or can deliver a common sense-oriented public voice.

The idea of the legitimacy of the citizen polemicist's voice—which was described in this chapter—reveals important features of online-talk participants: specifically, the nature of the relationship among online-talk participants, their understandings of themselves and fellow online-talk participants, and their sense of online political talk's political contribution. Online-talk participants consider themselves to be equals, not just in the sense that they are all common people, but also in the sense that they are both judging subjects who can make commonsensical judgments on public matters and political subjects who are separated from their socio-economic identities and interests. This sense of equality is grounded on a South Korean notion of citizenship—which I call *simin*—that was shaped and strengthened through the experience of struggle against the authoritarian regime. The association between this notion of citizenship and

online-talk participants has been encouraged by the once-dominant public discourse of the Internet as the technology for participatory democracy and its technological characteristic that hides the offline identities of Internet users. The idea of the legitimacy of the citizen polemicist's voice also shows what contribution online-talk participants think their political talk makes to politics. In their view, the primary political contribution of online political talk is to embed common sense into politics. In order to make this contribution to politics, they believe that they should engage in discussion and debate because they think these critical communicative interactions can result in the rise of a commonsensical voice. In the last three chapters, my focus was on a specific but central part of online political talk: citizen polemicism. In the next chapter, however, I explore online political talk as a whole. I will examine how online-talk participants interact with fellow participants. Through this exploration, I identify a central culture of online-talk participants.

Figures and Tables

	Transcendental voice	Non-transcendental voice
Representative voice	The modern Journalist	The bard, partisan press, Will Rogers, Vox populi
Non-representative voice	The priest, the public scientist, the expert	Individual voices of ordinary people

[6-1] The modes of the legitimization of public voices

Chapter 7

Thinking Together in Public: A Culture of Online-Talk Participants

In the last three chapters, I focused on citizen polemicism—which is a specific but central part of online political talk—and citizen polemicists. In these chapters, thus, online-talk participants were reduced to citizen polemicists and their audience members; and online political talk was regarded as interactions between these two types of online-talk participants. Unlike the previous three chapters, this chapter deals with online political talk as a whole and online-talk participants as members of online communities or companies formed for political talk. In this chapter, I consider online-talk participants to consist of various types of communicators including message posters who provide information or images rather than judgments, people who transfer online messages from an Internet site to another site, people who read each posting and evaluate it by giving a grad or recommendation score, comment posters, as well as citizen polemicists. I also regard online political talk as interactions among these various types of online-talk participants. In this chapter, specifically, I explore what online-talk participants experience through their communicative interactions and what they expect to gain from these communicative interactions. But I do not intend to provide online-talk participants' every experience and expectation. Rather, my main concern is with the culture that frames and shapes online political talk in South Korea. Through exploring the experiences and expectations of online-talk participants, I try to identify their culture.

The main purpose of this chapter is to introduce a particular culture—which I term *thinking together in public*—that is central to online political talk in South Korea. This culture consists of three main elements. First, online-talk participants form their judgments on public matters through communicative interactions with fellow citizens. More specifically, they pay attention to fellow citizens' thoughts, offer their responses to these thoughts, and want to receive fellow citizens' responses to their thoughts. In short, online-talk participants do not remain in a solitary and inward process of thinking. Instead, they think together with fellow citizens.

Second, online-talk participants are critical in thinking together. They are inclined to reveal their critical responses to postings. Many online-talk participants, nevertheless, are willing to put their thoughts before the critical judgment of fellow citizens and to justify their thoughts

by responding to criticism. In this sense, online political talk is oriented to critical interactions, which are centered on judgment, criticism, argument, and refutation.

Online political talk usually takes place in a public place that is visible and open to anybody. Online messages, therefore, can be read and criticized by total strangers. Online-talk participants, nevertheless, reveal their feelings and thoughts about public matters. They think that their political talk should be open to anybody, not only because they want more citizens to join their political talk, but also because, as described in chapter 6, they believe discussion and debate among people with various views and perspectives would result in the rise of a commonsensical voice. In addition, online-talk participants consider that their political talk should be visible to anybody because they expect their own or favorite thoughts to develop into collective discourses and to spread to a large number of citizens beyond their online communication networks. In short, online-talk participants are willing to think together not in a private place but in a public place. This is the third element of the thinking-together-in-public culture.

In describing this culture, I challenge a critical view of online political talk. Many researchers who are critical of online political talk have argued that this new political talk lacks communicative interactions or reciprocity among its participants (Davis, 1999, 2005; Hagemann, 2002; Siapera, 2004; Wilhelm, 2000). From this perspective, online political talk has been described as “facilitating self-expression and monologue, without in large measure the ‘listening,’ responsiveness, and dialogue that would promote communicative action” (Wilhelm, 2000, p. 98) or as “cacophony rather than wisdom, a form of expression that follows not parliamentary principles but the Hobbesian law of the boring dinner party” (McGrath, 1996, p. 84). In contrast to these researchers, I argue that online-talk participants seek not only to express their thoughts but also to engage in communicative interactions: in my view, thinking together with fellow citizens in public. In this respect, online political talk is oriented to the interactions of responses.

My study is not the first to note this feature of online political talk. Quite a few researchers have reported that online-talk participants engage in communicative interactions (see Figallo, 1995; Sachs, 1995; Shirky, 2008; Sproull & Faraj, 1995; Tanner, 2001). Unlike these studies, however, my study delves a little more deeply into the nature of these interactions. The contribution of this chapter is to clarify the interactive nature of online political talk and to give it a name: the thinking-together-in-public culture.

In this chapter, I also identify online-talk participants' expectations with regard to their communicative interactions. In chapter 5, I examined what online-talk participants—specifically, citizen polemicists—expect to gain through posting their thoughts online. In this chapter, I explore what online-talk participants expect to gain through thinking together with fellow citizens in public. I provide their three expectations: self-enlightenment, shared understanding and judgments about public matters, and the production of collective political discourse.

Yet, it is necessary to emphasize that the thinking-together-in-public culture is not the only one that characterizes online political talk in South Korea. In chapter 1, I introduced the term *online place*, which refers to online space filled up by people, practices, relationships, and meanings. Like offline places, online places for political talk have unfixed, contested, and multiple identities (see Massey, 1994, for the multiple identities of place). In fact, online-talk participants show different and multiple practices and have multiple senses of their online places for political talk. In my view, however, thinking together in public is one of the central cultures that frame and shape online political talk in South Korea.

The experience and pleasure of Internet forum participants

A small trade businessman in his late thirties, who uses “Daedoo” as his online name, is a regular visitor to *Seoprise*, but has posted only a few messages on the forum.¹⁶⁶ On January 22, 2007, he posted a message about this Internet forum on online café *Mirae*, of which he is a member.¹⁶⁷ In this message, he described how much he was impressed by *Seoprise* and what he experienced on the forum.

The essays I read in there [*Seoprise*] were a new diamond mine that I had neither seen nor heard about elsewhere. They were not only great people's great essays but also essays that average people with *sangsik* 상식 can understand easily and sympathize with. Such essays were continuously produced. My outlook became high and broad. I was happy because I met a new world and talked with people who shared the same orientation as

¹⁶⁶ The businessman engages in importing and selling foreign products, and exporting domestic products. Along with his wife, he operates a micro-business with no other employees.

¹⁶⁷ As I mentioned in the section on research method and sites in chapter 1, the online café *Mirae* was established on a sub-site on which a portal site allows its consumers to create their own forums with no charge. The members of the café are all committed visitors to *Seoprise* who are closer to lurkers or comment posters than message posters. They came to know each other on a sub-site of *Seoprise* designed for discussing sports. They created the online café for their informal and personal conversations because they felt uncomfortable with doing so on *Seoprise*.

mine. Of course, there were many people who had different orientations. But even such open debates were great. (Daedoo, 2007)

In this remark, the businessman has described what he has read on *Seoprise* as “a new diamond mine that I had neither seen nor heard about elsewhere” and “great people’s great essays.” These descriptions suggest that the Internet forum has been surprising and admirable for him. In the statement that his “outlook became high and broad,” one can also find that the forum has been informative and illuminating to Daedoo. In addition, his expression of being “happy” shows that he has taken pleasure in the forum. In short, the remark implies that *Seoprise* has been wonderful, enlightening, and joyous for him.

The above remark also provides information about Daedoo’s experiences that have led him to feel that *Seoprise* is wonderful, enlightening, and joyous. He mentioned that, on the forum, he has been exposed to “great essays.” But he did not describe why those essays are “great.” When my informants speak highly of specific online messages, they usually think that the messages provide new information, clear judgments, persuasive arguments, or insightful viewpoints. In fact, many of my informants said that they have been exposed to these good messages on their favorite Internet forums.

According to Daedoo’s remark, the essays he has read on *Seoprise* can be understood and agreed to by common people with *sangsik*, which, as mentioned in chapter 6, refers to general knowledge and common sense in Korean. This statement suggests that what he has described as “great essays” do not rely on technical knowledge, esoteric views, idiosyncratic ideas, and irrational thoughts. For Daedoo, *Seoprise* has been wonderful and enlightening not in spite of but due to the fact that the forum provides *sangsik*-based claims. As described in chapter 6, online-talk participants think that *sangsik*-based claims are valuable.

The above remark also reveals that for Daedoo, *Seoprise* has been joyous for two reasons. The first reason is that the forum has provided *sangsik*-based essays to which he could not be exposed elsewhere. The second reason is that in the forum, he has engaged in communicative interactions with people who share the same orientation with him. In the remark, Daedoo also mentioned that communicative interactions among people with different orientations had taken place on *Seoprise*. In his view, these interactions have been wonderful as well.

When I met the businessman in offline gatherings of the *Mirae* members before he posted the above message, he expressed the senses and feelings of *Seoprise* that are similar to what he

described in the above message. This businessman's experiences and pleasures with regard to the forum are not unique. Many *Seoprise* members attested similar experiences and pleasures in their messages posted on the forum and in their interviews and offline conversations, even though not all these members were as excited about them as Daedoo.

These experiences and pleasures with regard to online political talk were more succinctly articulated by a former administrator of *Seoprise* in his early forties—he was also a well-known citizen polemicist on the forum—who uses “Sanmaekcheorum” as his online name.¹⁶⁸ In a personal meeting with me, he said he missed the pleasure that he took in the forum. When I asked him what kinds of pleasure he had taken on the forum, he enumerated his pleasures as follows:

There was the pleasure of reading opinions similar to mine; the pleasure of reading deeper opinions than mine; [and] the pleasure of reading, even though different from mine, rational opinions. (personal communication, August 1, 2007)

This remark implies that for Sanmaekcheorum, *Seoprise* was great, enlightening, and joyous. In this sense, his feeling regarding the forum is not different from that of Daedoo.

In making sense of the remark, it should be considered that Sanmaekcheorum was a popular citizen polemicist on the forum. Unlike Daedoo, he posted many messages and garnered much response from fellow forum participants. In describing the pleasures that he took from the forum, nevertheless, he mentioned the pleasures of being exposed to fellow forum participants' opinions that are similar to, better than, or different from his opinions, rather than the pleasures that he took from posting his messages. This does not mean that he did not take pleasure from expressing his opinions on *Seoprise*. According to what he said in another interview with me, on the contrary, he was excited about posting his messages and receiving fellow forum participants' responses (personal communication, June 15, 2005). Despite this fact, he emphasized the pleasures that he took from reading fellow forum participants' messages. This suggests that for Sanmaekcheorum, *Seoprise* was not just a site for expressing his ideas and receiving audience response, but also a site for reading fellow forum participants' opinions, comparing these opinions with his opinions, and further talking with fellow citizens.

¹⁶⁸ He was a participant-turned-administrator of *Seoprise*. He worked for the forum from 2003 to 2006. When I had this meeting with him in 2007, he was working as an aid to a politician.

Yet, not all South Korean online-talk participants share these experiences and pleasures with respect to online political talk on *Seoprise*. Many members of other forums are critical of *Seoprise*. In their online messages or offline conversations with me, quite a few expressed extremely negative views on the forum. However, when these critics talked about online political talk on their favorite forums, they revealed experiences and pleasures that are similar to those expressed by Daedoo and Sanmaecheorum. Gaining these experiences and feelings from online political talk, thus, is not limited to the *Seoprise* members.

The above two remarks made by Daedoo and Sanmaecheorum display that *Seoprise* has provided not only informative, insightful, agreeable, or commonsensical opinions but also communicative interactions among the forum participants. These interactions are a source of the pleasure that the two *Seoprise* members took from the forum. This view of Internet forums was echoed by my other informants. Some informants said that they had been amazed by the fact that people with different social backgrounds and political views can continue to discuss public matters on a forum. For my informants, posting messages is not just to express their feelings or ideas but to engage in interactions with fellow forum members; reading messages is to be exposed not just to message posters' ideas but also to other online-talk participants' responses to the messages. In my informants' view, concisely, communicative interactions are central to online political talk.

Interaction-centered political communication

In the previous section, I showed that online-talk participants experience communicative interactions from online political talk. This experience is a source of their feelings that online political talk is wonderful, enlightening, and joyous. In this section, I will show that online-talk participants seek to engage in communicative interactions with fellow citizens.

In the forums that I studied, online-talk participants bring certain public issues to their forums not only by providing persuasive accounts of their judgments—which is a central part of citizen polemicism—but also by introducing information and stories about the issues, describing personal experiences in a narrative form, or expressing personal feelings in short sentences. There are a number of motivations behind posting messages about public matters on the forums: for example, an intention to share their interest, information, ideas, and feelings with other participants; an aspiration to express their opinions and feelings; or a desire to be praised or

approved by others. No matter what motivations move citizens to post their messages online, message posters look forward to receiving fellow forum participants' responses to their messages. Many message posters are indeed excited about receiving fellow citizens' responses to their postings. This feeling was clearly revealed by a taxi driver in his mid-thirties, who is a committed member of *Seoprise* but more akin to a reader in the forum.¹⁶⁹ When I met him in an offline social gathering of six *Seoprise* participants, he did not forget the pleasure that he took when his posting—which is a political image that he created—was linked to a sub-site of *Seoprise* that displays the list of messages receiving high recommendation scores. He exclaimed that “I felt like being on top of the world” (personal communication, December 30, 2005). He immediately added, “If I win a lottery, I will donate a half of the prize to *Seoprise*.” As this case suggests, the forum participants take pleasure in receiving fellow forum participants' responses. The experiences and expectations of receiving these responses, thus, drive the forum participants to post their messages online.

It is not surprising that public communicators seek to receive audience response and take pleasure in doing so. In the forums I studied, however, message posters' interest in and attention to receiving fellow forum participants' responses result not just from the fact that they want their postings to be popular and influential, but also from the fact that they want to engage in communicative interactions with fellow citizens.

That online-talk participants are desirous of exchanging opinions with fellow citizens was clearly expressed by citizen polemicist Bitoseryeok, introduced in chapter 5. As I mentioned in chapter 5, he answered, in his interview, my question of why he is committed to posting his thoughts online as follows: “It's fun to get readers' responses.... What really pleases me is that someone responds to it. [For instance], posting a comment, insulting, [or] praising” (personal communication, November 2, 2007). When I asked him, in the same interview, why he visits Internet forums, he answered as follows:

I visit [forums] for reading. I visit [forums] for looking for fun. It's fun to read, evaluate, sympathize with, and talk about other peoples' messages. I'm curious about what people with high political interest think. I see them [their thoughts], offer my thoughts, and discuss [them on forums].... It's fun to talk with people who have different thoughts. (personal communication, November 2, 2007)

¹⁶⁹ The online name of the taxi driver is “Yousambong.”

These two remarks show that in posting his thoughts online and visiting his favorite Internet forums, he is interested in and attentive to fellow citizens' opinions. More specifically, he is curious about fellow online-talk participants' thoughts about public matters and their responses to his thoughts, and he is also willing to react to these thoughts and responses. For Bitoseryeok, it is fun to talk about fellow online-talk participants' thoughts and to engage in communicative interactions with these participants. This pleasure led the citizen polemicist to post his messages online and to visit his favorite forums.

Like Bitoseryeok, my other informants take an interest in reading fellow citizens' opinions on public matters. This interest motivates them to visit Internet forums. Many informants are willing to offer their responses to these opinions. When they post their messages online, they also take an interest in receiving fellow online-talk participants' responses to their thoughts. This interest is another factor that motivates message posters to visit Internet forums again. It also encourages them to post new messages online. In addition, message posters frequently react to responses to their messages. For online-talk participants, in short, online political talk is to engage in communicative interactions with fellow citizens: more specifically, to be exposed to fellow citizens' thoughts, to talk about these thoughts, and to receive fellow citizens' opinions on their thoughts.

In the forums I studied, thus, online political communication is oriented to communicative interactions. This characteristic of online political talk is also revealed by the fact that as message posters become more involved in online political talk on the forums, they come to consider written responses to be a more important type of responses than others.

In many studies of online political talk, the existence of written responses—such as comments and replies—to an initial message is considered an indicator of interaction or reciprocity among online-talk participants. On the forums I studied, however, written responses are not the only responses that message posters receive from fellow online-talk participants. As described in chapter 1, the forum participants can respond to messages by clicking on them and grading them as well as through posting their comments on them. These responses by the forum participants produce four types of visible outcomes: the number of hits on a message; the sum of recommendation scores for a message; the number of comments on a message; and readers' opinions that are expressed through written responses such as comments and replies. While the number of hits shows the number of readers of a message, the sum of recommendation scores

indicates the extent to which forum participants approve of a message. The number of comments and replies displays how active readers' responses to a message are. Readers' opinions reveal how each of the individual forum participants reacts to a message. In short, message posters can identify, through these four types of indicators, fellow forum participants' responses to their messages.

Many informants said that when they had begun to post their messages on their forums, they had cared a lot about the number of hits and the recommendation scores of their messages. That is, at first, they were more interested in the number of audience members who read and approve their messages, rather than fellow forum participants' thoughts on their messages. They said, however, that as they continued to post messages online, they became more interested in and more attentive to fellow forum participants' opinions—expressed through comments or replies—on their messages. This change shows that the more message posters engage in online political talk on the forums, the more their political communication is oriented to communicative interactions.

How much online-talk participants expect to receive readers' comments is evidenced by the fact that on the forums, getting no comment is considered one of worst situations for message posters. My informants said that a malicious comment was better than no comment. In fact, when a message does not receive any responses, some forum participants sometimes post, out of kindness, a comment that has a very simple sentence: *muplebangji* 무플방지, which means “prevention of getting no comment.” This comment is considered a courtesy for a message poster on the forums.

The interest in fellow online-talk participants' responses is not limited to message posters. Posters of written responses to a message are also curious about responses to their responses from the poster of the initial message or other readers. This was clearly revealed by the remark that a high-school principal made in her interview. According to her remark, after she posts a comment on a message, she later clicks on the message again because she is interested in how the poster has responded to her response (personal communication, November 7, 2007). This interest in responses from fellow online-talk participants is shared by other comment posters I met.

Why are online-talk participants interested in fellow citizens' thoughts about public matters and responses to their thoughts? An answer to this question can be found in a

remark of a forty-year-old white-collar worker, who has regularly visited multiple Internet sites—including *Seoprise*—for political talk.¹⁷⁰ When he answered, in his interview, why he engages in online political talk, he articulated the nature of communicative interactions among online-talk participants as follows:

Even though everybody is interested in politics, I think I have a little stronger political interest than any others. And, since such political thinking cannot be conducted individually, [online sites for political talk] became places where [people] can think together. (personal communication, October 24, 2007)

In answering my question of what thinking together is, he said: “Thinking together is to express one’s own opinions and to receive immediate responses to such opinions.” As this remark shows, online-talk participants seek not just to express their thoughts but also to think together with fellow citizens.

That online-talk participants seek to think together with fellow citizens is also revealed by their understanding of online political talk. They call their communicative practices *sotong* 소통, the literal meaning of which is close to the notion of communication as exchange of messages or thoughts. Online-talk participants, however, do not have a clear notion of *sotong* in their minds. Many online-talk participants have posted their own definitions of the term; and they have sometimes debated its meaning. They, nevertheless, do not share a common definition of the term at the level of its practical and concrete meaning. But it is widely agreed among online-talk participants that *sotong* is contrasted with *baesul* 배설—meaning *excretion* in Korean—which refers to message-posting practices that are not oriented to communicating with fellow online-talk participants: in other words, to mutual understanding. *Baesul* is considered to include practices of posting messages that contain rude and offensive remarks without meaningful information or opinions, practice of posting the same message repeatedly, and practices of expressing only their opinions without trying to persuade and understand other online-talk participants who have different views. In short, *baesul* is used to refer to morally illegitimate communicative practices. This usage of these terms shows that in online-talk participants’ view, online political talk should be communicative interactions that are oriented to mutual understanding.

¹⁷⁰ He uses “Damdaminde” as his online name.

It is necessary, however, to note that messages do not always bring out readers' comments, and that readers' comments do not always receive responses from message posters. Even when messages receive readers' comments, in many cases such responding to messages ends after one or two exchanges. This tendency is stronger on *Seoprise* than on the other two forums. Based on this fact, outsiders of the forums can argue that the forums, in particular *Seoprise*, lack interaction or reciprocity among the forum participants.

I described two observations through my fieldwork in the previous section and this section: the forum participants have experienced communicative interactions with fellow participants; and they seek to engage in communicative interactions with fellow forum participants. If these observations are true, it is puzzling that many messages and critical comments do not receive responses from the forum participants.

This apparent lack of interaction or reciprocity on a forum comes, in part, from junk messages posted by trolls, who are opponents to or complainers about a forum. These people are called *arba* 알바 in South Korea.¹⁷¹ They often post sarcastic messages, many of which contain only dirty words and insults for their opponents without any evidence or logical reasoning of their arguments. They sometimes post the same message repeatedly, for example more than thirty times in an hour on a forum. The increase of these junk messages raises the proportion of messages that do not receive readers' comments. Since *Seoprise* is a much more well-known forum to Internet users in South Korea than the other forums, it has a larger number of junk messages than the other forums.

In addition to junk messages, the increase of the number of messages posted on a forum can drive up the number of messages that do not receive readers' comments. Individual forum participants have a limited amount of time and energy for reading and responding to messages. Such time and effort of each forum participant are not equally distributed among individual messages because they read and respond to messages selectively. The visibility of the forum participants' responses, furthermore, makes the forum participants concentrate on the messages that receive the most audience response. This reinforces an uneven distribution of the forum

¹⁷¹ In South Korea, participants in Internet forums believed, at first, that trolls were people who work, as their side jobs, for a political party or political group opposite to a political orientation of the forum participants. The forum participants, therefore, began to call trolls "*arbas*,"—which comes from a German word, "*arbeit*"[work]—which refers to a side job or a side-job holder in South Korea. Later, *arba* became a common term to refer to opponents to or complainers of a forum who have contempt for other forum participants and their views of public issues rather than communicating with other forum participants.

participants' responses, leading to the polarization between messages in receiving responses. When the number of messages on a forum is much larger than that of messages that can be read and responded by the total amount of time and effort that the forum participants are willing to spend on a forum, some messages are likely to receive no attention from the forum participants.

On *Seoprise*, in fact, even committed forum participants worry that they may not receive any responses. A bank employee in his mid-forties is a very committed forum participant.¹⁷² He has visited *Seoprise* and *Moveon21* almost every day for the past five years. Even though he is not a famous poster on the forums, he has posted quite a few messages on *Seoprise*, some of which have been promoted to the *daemon* and linked to a sub-site that shows the list of the messages receiving high recommendation scores. Many committed forum participants recognize the bank employee. He nevertheless said in his interview (personal communication, August 18, 2007):

I'm not comfortable in *Seoprise*. When I post even a short message of one or two sentences on *Seoprise*, I'm fearful of receiving no comment or no recommendation score.

There are invisible regulations on *Seoprise*.

The "invisible regulations" that the bank employee mentioned in my interview refers to the forum participants' responses to a message.

In spite of this apparent lack of interaction or reciprocity on the forums I studied, most forum participants have experienced or witnessed interactions of responses, which often develop into multiple interchanges of responses, collective dialogues, or debate. Such interactions of responses sometimes bring about chain reactions of responses like several-day-long discussions. On these forums, moreover, there are always quite a few messages that bring out active responses, even when many messages and comments receive no responses or few responses. In the forum participants' view, therefore, the apparent lack of interaction or reciprocity stems from the fact that some messages fail to gain the forum participants' attention. This is often considered to indicate that the messages are simply unworthy of being read. On the forums I studied, in brief, online-talk participants believe that their favorite forums have a potential for communicative interactions. This belief, along with the experience of interaction of responses, makes these online-talk participants more oriented to such interactions.

¹⁷² The bank employer uses "Pochong" or "Yirupiang" as his online name.

Criticism-oriented communicative interaction

As I described in the previous section, message posters want to receive fellow online-talk participants' responses to their messages: in particular, their written responses. But this is not to say that these responses are uncritical. Even though many responses are comments expressive of agreement and sympathy with initial messages and gratitude for posting such good messages, messages posters are frequently criticized and challenged by fellow online-talk participants.

As shown in Daedoo's and Sanmaecheorum's remarks that were introduced earlier in this chapter, therefore, online-talk participants are exposed to different or critical opinions and views. This experience was clearly expressed by a small business owner in his late forties.¹⁷³ In an interview I conducted on the train returning from an offline gathering of the *Mirae* members, he said: "*Seoprise* shows that [a public issue] can be seen from different perspectives, [because] opposing opinions are presented" (personal communication, July 7, 2007). This sense is echoed by my other informants. In answering my question of what they learned from online political talk, they said that they learned about the existence and specific details of different thoughts and feelings about public issues. These remarks reveal that critical communicative interactions take place in the forums.

Researchers of the social identification model of deindividuation effects, called the SIDE model, have argued that visual anonymity in online communication tends to strengthen online-talk participants' group identity and conformity to group norms and thus to produce the expression of hostile and extreme arguments with regard to outgroup positions (Reicher, Spears, & Postmes, 1995; Spears, Lea, & Lee, 1990). This argument may imply that online-talk participants are likely to be uncritical of ingroup members's thoughts. On the Internet forums I studied, however, critical responses to messages are not just posted by online-talk participants who can be considered trolls, who, as mentioned in the previous section, are usually called *arba* by my informants. As the case of a debate about the Dr. Hwang scandal—discussed in chapters 4 and 6—shows, message posters are also criticized or challenged by fellow forum members.

By the nature of their communicative action, many online-talk participants are critical. As mentioned in chapter 4, they primarily seek to form their judgments on public matters. As described in the same chapter, judging public matters is inherently connected to critical

¹⁷³ The small business owner uses "Garam" as his online name.

evolutions of other judgments. Such judgments, moreover, are always criticizable and disputable. It thus does not come as a surprise that many online-talk participants have critical attitudes.

Many forum members I met are not just critical, but also willing to express their critical responses to messages posted on the forums. This critical attitude is not limited to forum members who can be regarded as committed citizen polemicists. In their interviews, forum members who are more akin to the comment poster than the citizen polemicist also revealed this critical attitude. They said that the value of comment in online political talk lies in expressing critical opinions on messages. In fact, they are willing to reveal their critical thoughts through their comments. An occupational translator in his mid-thirties said in his interview that he posted a comment when he wanted to present an opposing opinion to a message (personal communication, October 29, 2007).¹⁷⁴ An elementary-school vice-principal in his mid-fifties said in his interview that “when I’m sure [a message] is wrong, I post a comment” (personal communication, November 7, 2007).¹⁷⁵ These critical attitudes of the forum participants lead message posters to face criticism and challenge.

This critical atmosphere on the forums is evidenced by the fact that quite a few committed forum participants are reluctant to post their thoughts about public matters due to the fear of being criticized. This fear is strengthened by the fact that online political talk is open to an unlimited audience of citizens-at-large. Critical comments on messages are often provided by total strangers as well as by familiar forum participants. These strangers include people who are knowledgeable of the issues that messages deal with. Mid-ranking police official Juklimnupil, who was introduced as a citizen polemicist in chapters 4 and 5, said in his interview that when he posted a message about a legal issue, he was surprised to receive a comment from a law professor with whom he was acquainted (personal communication, July 4, 2006). A businessman in his mid-forties working for a multinational technology corporation has posted quite a few messages about economic and business issues on *Seoprise* and *Moveon21* since 2003.¹⁷⁶ In his interview, he said that he was always careful about posting his thoughts because anybody, even experts on an issue, can read the message (personal communication, September 17, 2007). He added that he had experience of receiving critical comments on his messages from respondents who are supposed to be experts on the issues.

¹⁷⁴ The online name of this translator is “Jayuro.”

¹⁷⁵ The vice-principal uses “Nurungji” and “Vinirubongdari” as his online name.

¹⁷⁶ He uses “Keobeongimda” as his online name.

In addition to taking the risk of being criticized, message posters are required to react to critical responses to their thoughts. In chapter 4, I described that the citizen polemicist is considered to have to address critical responses. In the forums I studied, not just citizen polemicists but also every type of message posters and comment posters are expected to reply to critical responses.

This expectation was clearly revealed by a construction consulting engineer in his early fifties, whom I mentioned in chapter 6. He has visited *Seoprise* regularly for the past four years and has an affinity with the forum.¹⁷⁷ He nonetheless has posted very few messages that convey his thoughts about public matters. The engineer said in his interview that he has seldom even posted comments on messages (personal communication, October 16, 2007). When I asked him why he did not post more messages and comments, he answered that “writing [online] requires courage” to expose oneself to criticism. This remark shows that he has been worried about being exposed to criticism. But what he has feared is not just the risk of being criticized. This is clearly expressed by what he continued to say right after the above remark.

[Writers] should take responsibility for their messages. [They] should respond to critiques and refutations to their messages. But I don’t want to be scolded. So, I [usually] don’t write any messages. (personal communication, October 16, 2007)

According to this remark, another factor that has made the engineer reluctant to post his thoughts about public matters online is fellow online-talk participants’ expectation in which message or comment posters have to address critical responses to their thoughts. He has been worried about failing to meet this expectation because it requires him to expend a high level of mental effort and a considerable amount of time. He has considered that if he fails to meet the expectation, he would be scolded. He therefore has hardly posted messages or even comments online.

The above remark also implies that having to react to critical responses is like a moral code with respect to how to engage in online political talk. For the construction consulting engineer, according to the remark, addressing critical responses is the responsibility that message posters should take.

This moral sense is more clearly revealed by the fact that, on the forums I studied, online-talk participants regard failure to address critical responses as a central factor of *baesul*, which, as mentioned in the previous section, refers to illegitimate practices in engaging in online

¹⁷⁷ The engineer uses “Maengmaengy” as his online name.

political talk. In their view, reacting to critical responses is a necessary factor for *sotong*, which means, in its broad sense, communicative interaction that is oriented to mutual understanding. As described in the previous section, *sotong* is a type of communicative action in which online-talk participants believe they seek to engage.

The moral sense of having to address critical responses results just not from online-talk participants' view of online political talk as *sotong* but also from their idea about the legitimacy of their voice. In their view, as explained in chapter 6, critical communicative interactions are a main factor that makes the voice of online-talk participants—specifically, citizen polemicists—legitimate; and participation in these interactions distinguishes legitimate online-talk participants from illegitimate participants, called “*bbas*.” In this idea, online-talk participants should be critical and react to critical responses. Critical attitude and the willingness to address critical response, therefore, are considered the moral foundations of online-talk participants.

Due to these understandings of online political talk, in the forums I studied, online-talk participants are pressurized into reacting to critical responses to their postings. This pressure also comes from the contextual condition of online political talk, which is shaped by the technological characteristics of the Internet. Written responses are visible to everyone on the forums. The forum participants, therefore, feel that they lose face if they do not respond to critiques of their messages. This potential feeling of losing face, along with the forum participants' moral expectations, compels message or comment posters to respond to critical responses. In short, the Internet not only increases, as mentioned above, critical responses, but also encourages online-talk participants to react to critical responses.

Hence, it is not surprising that in the forums I studied, many online-talk participants are willing to reply to critical responses. Their willingness to react to critical responses is demonstrated by my experiences on the forums. Psychiatrist Chung Hyeshin—who is famous for her essays analyzing public figures in South Korea—posted a critical column about then-President Roh and then-lawmaker Yoo Simin in an online newspaper, *Ohmynews* (www.ohmynews.com). On September 6, 2005, a forum participant using “Karam” as his/her constant online name posted a message critical of the column on *Seoprise*. As a response to this message, I posted a critical comment, in which I argued that his message is based on an incorrect understanding of Chung's column. I named myself “*Noonting*,”—a newly coined online term in South Korea that refers both to Internet-users who only eye messages and to such practice—

which is widely used by visitors who do not have their own constant online names on a forum.¹⁷⁸

As the form of comment, Karam posted his first response to my comment, in which he said that he would answer my questions after he read Chung's column once again. The next day, in the form of a new message, he posted his second response to my comment. In this response, Karam said: "I have thought about the *noonting*'s critique of my message for the past three days. I realized that I was wrong. So, I apologize to Chung and readers of *Seoprise*."

Karam's case shows that the forum participants are sensitive to critical responses and willing to address such responses. In fact, when I posted critical comments on messages, I more often than not received responses from an initial message poster or other readers. In particular, committed forum participants usually responded to my critical comments. When I re-responded to their responses to my comment, they often re-responded to my re-responses. These interactions sometimes lasted for several days or involved exchanges of more than ten critical responses.

The willingness to react to critical responses is expressed not only by committed citizen polemicists but also by many forum participants who can be regarded as comment posters. On *Seoprise*, the small business owner, who was introduced at the beginning of this section, has seldom posted his own messages but has often posted his comments on fellow online-talk participants' messages. In the interview conducted on the train, he said: "Of course, I express what I think is wrong" [in a message] (personal communication, July 7, 2007). He immediately added that "When somebody responds to my comment, I explain why I think so."

On the forums I studied, however, not all online-talk participants respond to critiques of their messages. For example, Kim Dong Ryul—who is one of the most popular writers on *Seoprise*—has not responded to most comments on his messages. This behavior caused quite a few forum participants to be critical of him because he has failed to meet their expectation. When I interviewed some fans of Kim Dong Ryul, they also agreed that it was wrong for him to show no response to readers' comments. This case shows that even though the sense of having to address critiques does not completely govern online-talk participants' practices, it plays an important role in guiding and evaluating their practices.

When online-talk participants post their messages on their forums, they are clearly aware that they not only express their thoughts in public but also make their thoughts subject to the

¹⁷⁸ The meaning of *noonting* is similar to that of *anonymous* or *anon* in America's online political talk.

judgments of fellow participants. These message posters also know that these other participants, as the judges of their messages, consist of critical comment posters as well as applauding audience members. In addition, they know that their judges read not only their messages but also critical comments on the messages. They thus are conscious that they can be embarrassed when they post their messages online.

In spite of the requirement of having to react to critical responses and the likelihood of being embarrassed, many online-talk participants post their thoughts online. This is not just because, as described in chapter 5, they want to express their opinions, to reveal their self-worth, or to perform their civic mission, but also because for them, these critical interactions are a source of the pleasure. Another small business owner in his late forties said in his interview:¹⁷⁹

At first, I feared that somebody could dispute my message. Now, it is fun to get into arguments. When I write a message, I expect somebody to dispute it. Dispute is better than praise. [Message posters] should get used to being disputed. (personal communication, January 3, 2006)

This remark shows that he takes pleasure in critical interactions. Like this small business owner, many active online-talk participants I met have not regarded being criticized and evaluated as a bothersome process. Rather, they said that they enjoyed receiving critical comments and responding to such comments.

For my informants, critical communicative interactions are not only enjoyable but also enlightening. They believe that fellow online-talk participants' criticism and evaluation contribute to the development of their thoughts. They said that they sometimes had changed their initial thoughts or messages, based on readers' comments. A full-time employee of a civic-movement organization for laborers in her early thirties explained, in her interview, why she thinks critical comments are important: One "should read [readers' comments]. Aha! There are some people who think this way.... Aha! I should have thought of this aspect..." (personal communication, September 4, 2007). A theology Ph.D.—whom I mentioned in chapter 5—said in his interview:¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ The small business owner uses "Jayurobgyenolja" as his online name.

¹⁸⁰ The theology Ph.D. uses "Wooriyeri" as his online name.

It was good to receive other people's evaluation and opinions of my messages. That helped me think in a rational way. Remaining in my thoughts is different from being exposed to other people's opinions. (personal communication, October 2, 2006)

These two remarks show that through thinking together, the two online-talk participants seek to enlighten themselves. For them, this self-enlightenment is a source of the pleasure that they take from online political talk.

The experience of this pleasure of critical interactions led online-talk participants to seek such pleasure. That is, the pleasure becomes a desire. This desire is clearly revealed in a forty-five-year-old shoe retailer's explanation of what he seeks on *Zzizil.net*.¹⁸¹ Like many members of other Internet forums, the members of *Zzizil.net* I met have believed that a high quality of online political talk has been realized on this forum. In their messages posted on the forum, their off-line social gatherings, and their interviews, they often said with pride that their members are of *kkachil* 까칠. *Kkachihan*, the adjective form of *kkachil*, originally means *haggard* in Korean. In everyday conversation, however, this term is often used to refer to being unkind. By *kkachilhan*, my informants meant "critical." The members of *Zzizil.net* I met have considered critical attitude of their members to be one of the central factors that led to a high quality of political talk on the forum.

Like other members of *Zzizil.net*, the shoe retailer, who formerly worked as a photo journalist for a major daily newspaper and uses "Koko" as his online name, emphasized the importance of critical attitude. He said in an off-line meeting that he needed people who could stimulate him intellectually (personal communication, February 12, 2007). He said in another off-line meeting that he had experienced such stimulation on *Zzizil.net* (personal communication, July 22, 2007). In a message that he later posted on *Zzizil.net*, he articulated his ideas more clearly:

I think I need to say why I want *Zzizil.net* to be more open to other people. I hope I can see more participants like Pocket, Nimiral[ist], Multuk[simsong], Poohoo, and Dark Baedal on *Zzizil.net*.... I want to read more of their messages. I want to develop my mind

¹⁸¹ As introduced in chapter 1, the main members of *Zzizil.net* consist of online-talk participants who were critical of Hwang Woo-Suk during the Dr. Hwang scandal. They formed their communication networks during the time in which they debated the scandal with Hwang's supporters on *Seoprise*. Since they thought that the administrators of *Seoprise* were biased against Hwang's critics in moderating the debate of the scandal, they established their own online space for political talk on Google Groups in October 2006. They moved their online space for political talk to a new public web forum, *Zzizil.net*, in May 2007.

in the process of learning or getting criticized and embarrassed through critical interaction with them. (Koko, December 7, 2007)

This remark shows the shoe retailer's belief that online critical interactions result in enlightenment. According to the remark, this belief has led him to have a desire for engaging in critical interactions. He has also believed that the more people with critical attitude participate in critical communicative interactions, the better these interactions would be. In this sense, he has wanted *Zzizil.net* to be open to anybody.

In sum, many online-talk participants I met are not reluctant to engage in critical communicative interactions with fellow participants. They are ready to offer their critical responses to fellow online-talk participants' thoughts, to expose their thoughts to critical examination, and to react to critical responses to their thoughts. They view online political talk as *sotong* and consider critical interactions to be a source of the legitimacy of their voice. They, thus, consider critical attitude to be valuable and regard having to react to critical responses as a morally required act. Quite a few online-talk participants are happy to discuss and debate public matters with fellow online-talk participants. But not all my informants—many of whom are more akin to lurkers—are willing to engage in discussion and debate. Even these informants, however, have believed that online-talk participants should engage in critical interactions. They, moreover, have wanted not just to read fellow online-talk participants' good messages but also to view debates among online-talk participants.

The rise of the critical culture of online-talk participants stems, in part, from the technological characteristics of the Internet-based communication. As described above, the visibility and openness of online public communication to anybody increase critical responses and encourage online-talk participants to address critical responses. The technological characteristics of the Internet-based relationship among communication partners are another factor that assists the growth of the critical culture. Off-line political talks rely on pre-existing networks of personal contacts and social groups. Off-line talk participants, thus, are reluctant to express disagreements with or critiques of their personal contacts' opinions, because they fear losing friendly relationships with their contacts (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 2005/1955; Mutz, 2006). Online-talk participants, however, usually consist of strangers who share the same interests. Unlike face-to-face-based communicative interactions, moreover, online communicative

interactions completely lack immediate actual presence of communication partners.¹⁸² Online communicators, as a result, are freer from social pressure to conform to the opinions of communicative partners than communicators in face-to-face interactions. These characteristics of online public communication, thus, make it easier for critics of online messages to post critical comments.

The technological characteristics of the Internet-based communication space, however, are not sufficient conditions for the growth of critical online culture. They contribute not only to the rise of critical communicative interaction but also to its breakdown. Anonymity and the lack of nonverbal cues in online communication allow online communicators to easily violate norms and codes that are considered socially appropriate for communicative interactions (Kiesler, Siegel, & McGuire, 1984; Reicher, Spears, & Postmes, 1995; Spears, Lea, & Lee, 1990).¹⁸³ Online-talk participants, thus, can easily ignore fellow participants' responses or reveal aggressive and hostile responses. The lack of nonverbal cues is also likely to increase misunderstanding in online communication. Due to these technological features, online communicative interactions tend to turn into clash and flaming. The experience of these hostile communicative interactions leads many online-talk participants to avoid engaging in online political conversation with people who have different opinions. Instead, they try to talk only to people who share the same opinions. That is, online political communication tends to cause polarization and homophily of online-talk participants or to produce "cacophony" or "monologue" (Davis, 1999; Sunstein, 2007).

The forums I studied have not been free from these two tendencies. As described above, nevertheless, many forum participants have sought to engage in critical communicative interactions. This critical culture contributes to producing critical interactions on the forums. The technological characteristics of online public communication, moreover, induce the forum participants to put their critical values into practices in their political communication. Since the forums are visible and open to anybody, online messages are likely to reach people with different opinions and to stimulate these people to post their critical responses to the messages. The lack of the immediate actual presence of communication partners in online communication also make it easier for these critics to post their critical responses. Message posters, as a consequence, can

¹⁸² I use *actuell presence* as a term that is oppsite to virtual presense (see K. M. Lee, 2004 for the concept of virtual presense and its types).

¹⁸³ See Walther (2011) for a critical review of these arguments.

hardly avoid critical responses. In theory, they could ignore such critical comments. In reality, though, the visibility of the critical comments to other forum participants, along with critical culture of online-talk participants, presses message posters to justify their thoughts by responding to the critiques. Socrates attempted to help Athenian citizens to think critically. His outcome was “to make public, in discourse, the thinking process” (Arendt, 1982, p. 37). The forum participants make public their thoughts through posting their messages online. One of their outcomes is to bring about critical communicative interaction.

Online-talk participants have been subjected to misunderstanding, hostile interactions, or flaming. At the same time, however, they have learned through the experience of online political talk that critical interactions provide pleasure and contribute to the development of their thoughts. They therefore seek such interactions and want to form the companions necessary for them. In short, the experience of critical interactions has transformed online-talk participants into seekers of critical interaction.

From thinking together to producing collective discourse

As described in the previous two sections, online-talk participants seek to think together with fellow citizens through communicative interactions that are oriented to discussion and debate. This characteristic of online political talk is exemplified by a case of discussion about South Korean newspapers’ reports on then-president Roh Moo-Hyun that took place on *Moveon21* and *Seoprise* in early January 2007.

Kim Chan Sik—who is an owner and manager of a small company in his early forties—is a well-known citizen polemicist on *Seoprise* and *Moveon21*. He uses his real name Kim Chan Sik as his online name. On January 8, 2007, at 10:37 PM, he posted a critical message about major South Korean newspapers on *Moveon21*. These South Korean newspapers belatedly reported that, during the APEC summit in November 2006,¹⁸⁴ South Korean president Roh Moo-Hyun made an informal suggestion to the prime minister of Japan, Abe Shinzo, about renaming the marginal sea bordered by North and South Korea, Japan, and Russia. The official international name of the sea has been disputed between South Korea and Japan. South Korea proposes “East Sea” as its official name, and Japan supports “the Sea of Japan.” In his meeting

¹⁸⁴ APEC is an acronym of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, which is a forum for twenty-one countries around the edge of the Pacific Ocean.

with Abe Shinzo, Roh suggested that South Korea and Japan make an effort to maintain a friendly relationship. As an example of such efforts, Roh mentioned the case of the dispute over the marginal sea. He proposed to think about calling the sea a new name, for example the “Sea of Peace,” the “Sea of Friendship,” or the “Sea of Reconciliation,” in order to settle the dispute. When Roh’s unofficial suggestion became public about two months later, the major South Korean newspapers criticized him, describing his casual suggestion as an irresponsible one. These newspapers argued that Roh’s suggestion might be interpreted by Japan as a sign of abandoning the name of “East Sea,” and could damage South Koreans’ efforts to make “East Sea” used as an official name of the sea in the world society. In his message that embeds the headlines of news articles about Roh’s suggestion, Kim claimed that he could not understand why South Korean news media were so harshly criticizing Roh’s suggestion to take into consideration a third name of the sea that would replace “East Sea” and the “Sea of Japan.”

In his message, Kim Chan Sik emphasized that such excessive critiques against Roh lasted for the past four years, since Roh had become the president of South Korea. “Under such four-year-long condemnation,” he said, “even Jesus would become Satan, and even Buddha would become an axis of evil.” And then he introduced examples of how Buddha and Jesus can be criticized by the South Korean press:

When Buddha left for his deliberation from worldly existence, [South Korean presses would have criticized that] “Buddha left behind ordinary people’s painful lives and sought only after his own way of life.”

When Jesus said that “he that is without sin, cast a stone at her,” [South Korean press would have criticized that] “Jesus [caused] a wave of controversy by advocating an adulterous woman.”

Kim’s message was viewed more than two-thousand times. Kim and fourteen respondents to his message exchanged their ideas and opinions through sixty comments on the message. Kim’s message received positive responses from most of its respondents. It was not surprising because most participants in the forum share critical attitudes towards the South Korean press.

Yet, Kim’s message did not go without any objections. One objector disagreed with Kim’s opinion that even the *Hankyure*—which is considered a liberal or progressive newspaper in South Korea—was overcritical of Roh’s suggestion. The objector argued that the *Hankyure*’s

report did not seem to attack Roh. In his response to this objection, Kim said that he did not agree with the *Hankyure*'s expression that Roh's suggestion produced a wave of controversy. "I don't think," Kim added, "Roh's suggestion can be considered a controversial issue." Another objector, who was a regular visitor to *Moveon21* with a constant nick name of "Jol," posted the opinion that Roh's casual suggestion was naive and imprudent because international relation affairs are determined by the logic of power. Kim responded to Jol's objection by saying that what Roh actually suggested to the prime minister of Japan was for South Korea and Japan to take a positive and negotiable position in order to maintain a friendly relationship. In subsequent comments, Jol emphasized that foreign policies should be made according to different logic from national policies. In his second response to Jol's comments, Kim pointed out the fact that the South Korean press described Roh's suggestion as compromising or humiliating. While Kim and Jol were exchanging their opinions, a third respondent forwarded part of the written text of the dialogue between Roh and the prime minister of Japan, which Roh's administration posted on its official web site. The forwarder of the part of the dialogue intended to help Jol recognize exactly what the nuances of Roh's suggestion were. After reading this part of the dialogue, Jol explained her/his initial opinion on Roh's suggestion again, adding that "my opinion seems to follow *Cho-Joong-Dong*'s frame." As mentioned in chapter 3, *Cho-Joong-Dong* refers to the big three newspapers—the *Chosun Ilbo*, the *JoongAng Ilbo*, and the *Dong-A Ilbo*—in South Korea. These dialogues among Kim and his readers show that as described in the previous sections, through online political talk, online-talk participants think together.

When messages are posted on the forums I studied, this sort of dialogues does not always take place. But such dialogues are very usual between a citizen polemicist and her/his readers or among participants in the forums studied in my research. The forum participants talk about current issues everyday by exchanging their opinions, feelings, ideas and information. They usually begin to talk about a current issue by critically reviewing news articles and editorials about the issue. They compare a news article with the facts that it reports, and contrast a current editorial with previous editorials about an issue similar to one that the current editorial deals with. They also compare news articles about the same issue reported in different news media. In this process of putting news media messages under the microscope, they challenge the definition and interpretation by the news media of a current issue and its importance, trying to collectively define the issue and determine its importance from their own perspectives. These critiques of

news media are everyday practices in the forums. (As I described in chapter 3, the rise of the Internet led media criticism to become a part of everyday life, which has contributed to the decline of the news media's authority and the development of online political talk among ordinary citizens. As described above, media criticism has become a central topic of online political talk. Online political talk, therefore, has further facilitated the growth of media criticism. In short, the entrance of media criticism into everyday life is the cause and result of online political talk.) This shows that through thinking together in public, online-talk participants on the forums I studied seek not just—as mentioned in the previous section—to enlighten themselves but also to form shared understandings and judgments about public matters. In this respect, the forum participants are not only groups of participatory citizens who talk about current issues, but also groups of critical audiences who try to understand media messages collectively.

This nature of the forum participants is clearly evidenced in a comment on another message that is critical of the South Korean press for criticizing Roh's suggestion about the East Sea. It reads:

It is a really sad reality. It is sad that news articles by *Cho-Joong-Dong* determine Korea's public opinion. It would be great if we were to put these parodies together in a book and publish it. Even if the book is not well sold, future historians would record ordinary people's resistance to the distortion of public opinion by *Cho-Joong-Dong*.

In this comment, the comment poster regards online political talk as discursive struggle against the dominance of the mainstream news media in South Korean political communication; and she/he considers this struggle to have an important meaning in the history of Korea. The remark, thus, suggests that for the comment poster, online political talk is not just fun or a way to self-enlightenment but a serious mission to make Korean society better. As I explained in Chapter 5, committed citizen polemicists regard citizen polemicism as their civic missions. Likewise, many online-talk participants consider online political talk to be a civic mission that they should carry out.

Kim Chan Sik's critical message about the news reports of Roh's unofficial suggestion to the prime minister of Japan would have been a very ordinary case of citizen polemicism in the forums, had the message not included the parodies of how Buddah and Jesus can be criticized by

the South Korean press.¹⁸⁵ These parodies made Kim's usual message special, not only because it received much larger responses than ordinary messages posted on the forums, but also because it produced a collective political discourse.

Two respondents to Kim Chan Sik's initial message about Roh's suggestion presented their ideas about the parodies of South Korean press. Sobu, an active participant of *Moveon21*, posted examples of Socrates, Napoleon, and Yi Sun-sin:

Socrates, "a law is a law, however undesirable it may be."..... [The headline of] the Korean press [would be] "Socrates, A Wave of Controversy by Supporting a Bad Law~"

Napoleon, "the die is cast."....."Napoleon Enjoys Gambling of a Die."

Yi Sun-sin, "don't announce my death."....."Yi Sun Sin Ordered His Subordinates to Lie, [Causing] a Wave of Controversy about His Morality."¹⁸⁶

Another respondent, who used an online name of "Pyungwhahae," posted a revised version of the parody of the story of Jesus and an adulterous woman that Kim Chan Sik originally introduced in his message. The respondent's use of "Pyungwhahae"—which means the "sea of peace" in Korean—as an online name showed that this respondent was not a regular poster with a constant online name on this forum. (It is very usual in the forums studied in my research that when forum visitors who have no constant online name on the forums want to post their messages or replies, they use, as their online names, either "*Noonting*"—mentioned in the previous section—or any words related to the issue that forum participants talk about.) In her/his posting, Pyungwhahae tried to distinguish the big three newspapers, the *Chosun Ilbo*, the *JoongAng Ilbo*, and the *Dong-A Ilbo*, from other South Korean news media. Pyungwhahae said:

If the South Korean press describes that Jesus advocated an adulterous woman, it would be a mild critique. [The headlines of] *Cho-Joong-Dong* [would be] "Cruel Jesus, Instigated to Cast a Stone at a Poor Woman."

As mentioned in chapter 3, these three newspapers are distinguished from the rest of the news media in South Korea in two senses: first, they are considered to be central to the power of the news media; second, they are believed to share similar political orientations—which are

¹⁸⁵ For the relationship between citizen polemicism and media criticism, see chapter 4: in particular, Juklimnupil's case.

¹⁸⁶ Yi Sun Sin is the most famous and respected admiral in the history of Korea. When he was shot in the naval battle against Japan in 1598, he said, "Don't let my death be known."

considered “conservative”—and to reveal their political orientation in a obvious and aggressive manner. In fact, they were considered to be most critical of then-president Roh and his administration. Based on this understanding of South Korean political communication, Pyungwhahae wanted to make two versions of parodies. One is about *Cho-Joong-Dong*, and the other is about the rest South Korean news media.

In another comment on Kim’s thread, Sobu suggested that if they parody the South Korean press’s nitpicking criticism against Roh, it would get a large amount of attention on portal sites. He put together the ideas presented by Kim, himself, and Pyungwhahae, posting them in a new message. In his new message, Sobu asked the forum participants to present their ideas about parodying the press.

Sobu’s suggestion received a much larger response on *Seoprise* than *Moveon21*. A participant using an online name of “Parody” introduced the parodies and idea proposed in Sobu’s message to *Seoprise* at 12:35 AM on January 9. (The use of “Parody” as an online name revealed that the poster did not have a constant online name on *Seoprise* and *Moveon21*.) It was not unusual that messages posted on either *Seoprise* or *Moveon21* are transferred to the other forum, because quite a few people visited the two forums at the same time, and the participants in the two forums shared similar interests and perspectives. In the message posted on *Seoprise*, *Parody* suggested to make more parodies and to spread them out to portal sites. In particular, *Parody* presented clearly that the parodies could be presented in two different versions. The first version of parody is for the South Korean press in general, and the second one for *Cho-Joong-Dong*. *Parody*’s message was clicked more than one thousand times and received more than thirty comments. In those comments, some responders posted new parodies. Two responders pointed out incorrect information in a previous parody. They said that the person who said “the die is cast” was not Napoleon but Julius Caesar. *Parody* put together these parodies and ideas in a new message and posted it on *Seoprise* at 12:57 PM on January 9. *Parody*’s second message drew more attention and led many participants to propose a large number of ideas about the parody of the South Korean Press.

The next day, a forum participant, who uses “Ggareureu Saedaeg” as an online name, posted cartoons of these parodies— more exactly *Cho-Joong-Dong*’s versions of these parodies—on *Seoprise* (see figure 8-1 for these cartoons). In the message, the forum participant said that the cartoons were made by a blogger who uses an online name of “yoo.” *Parody*’s

second message was revised by adding the cartoon versions of the parodies. This revised message was viewed more than forty-eight thousand times and received more than seven hundred comments. It took less than forty-eight hours for Kim Chan Sik's initial idea of parodying the South Korean press to be made into cartoons. The cartoon versions of the parodies, called "next day, *Cho-Joong-Dong*," were disseminated to various Internet sites like blogs, web forums, and portal sites, receiving a large amount of attention from Internet users. The story of these parodies received attention from news media as well as Internet users. Several news media introduced these parodies as a case of media criticism conducted by citizens.

This case shows that online political talk is communicative interactions not just for forming and sharing opinions on public matters but also for producing collective political discourses.¹⁸⁷ This collaborative production of political discourse by average citizens is not surprising in South Korea after the rise of the Internet; many collective political discourses have been produced through online political talk.¹⁸⁸ That is, the rise of the Internet-based participatory political communication has made such collaborative production a frequent phenomenon in South Korea.

It is necessary, however, to note that ordinary citizens' collaborative production of political discourse is not a new phenomenon ushered in by the Internet. Such a phenomenon had existed prior to the rise of the Internet. For example, Robert Darnton (1990, 2010), a cultural

¹⁸⁷ See Shirky, 2008 for online collaborative production of discourse.

¹⁸⁸ The rise of the collaborative production of political discourse by citizens is clearly illustrated by a story about an online-talk participant who used "Pitusungyi"—which means "the bloody" in Korean—as his online name. On December 31, 2002, when less than two weeks had passed since the 2002 presidential election, Pitusungyi—who later became an active participant in online discussions on *Seoprise*—posted his short online message on the message board of *Knowhow*, which is a different site from *Knowhow21/Moveon21*. It was the official website of then-president-elect Roh Moo-hyun, who was the candidate of New Millennium Democratic Party (MDP). The website was closed after Roh took office as President. In his message, Pitusungyi evaluated how much or how little the MDP's main politicians contributed to Roh's triumph in the election. Based on his evaluation, he mentioned the names of the MDP's politicians whom Roh should eliminate. This message was rapidly disseminated to other sites, such as web forums like *Seoprise* and online newspapers, and exposed to a great number of citizens. The message became one of the main issues in South Korean politics. Some politicians and journalists guessed that the message must have been written by one of the MDP's members who could access various sources of political information because they thought it contained very exact information. However, when Pitusungyi revealed himself to the news media, he was identified as a full-time ironworker who could not gain access to other sources of political information except for the news media and Internet sites. In press interviews, he argued that his message was based on a compilation and synthesis of previous messages about the same topic found in online newspapers and posted by other participants in online political discussions. In this respect, Pitusungyi's message was a product created collectively by groups of citizens who exchange political information and discuss political issues on the Internet.

historian of early modern France, has described how ordinary people in Paris produced a collective political discourse before the French Revolution.

Yet, online talk has made some differences in producing collective discourses of political issues. Online political talk has made it possible for citizens' collective discourses to be produced in a much shorter time and with a more expansive effect than they had been before the rise of the Internet. Online talk-based collaborative discourses, moreover, are produced through messages and responses posted online. This makes the "collaborative" process of the production of collective discourse visible to participants in the process. In online political talk, its participants' identities are invisible, but the conversation process and its effects are visible. These changes in the production of collective discourses have led online-talk participants to clearly recognize the fact that they participate in producing collective political discourses through exchanging their ideas and opinions with other ordinary people.

Citizens' awareness of the fact that they participate in the process of collaborative public communication is revealed in a comment that a reader of *Ohmynews* posted. When *Ohmynews* reported a news story about the parodies, "next day, *Cho-Joong-Dong*," the reader posted her/his response to the story as a comment. It reads as follows:

You can feel pleasure that each perspective of many people expands many other people's extent of thinking, can't you? With regards to communication of society, people who have dreamed of this free time seem at last to accomplish their dream, don't they? Our society is getting better, isn't it?

This remark shows that the comment poster considers online political talk—in other words, thinking together in public—to be not just a way to self-enlightenment but also a way to collective enlightenment of people. A result of this collective enlightenment is the production of collective political discourse.

The sense of online political talk as the collaborative production of political discourse was also expressed by citizen polemicist Sadobaoro, the owner of the specialized bi-weekly newspaper, whom I mentioned in chapter 6. When I asked him, in his interview, what kind of response he expects to receive through posting his thoughts online, he answered as follows:¹⁸⁹

In the beginning, I used to like acclamation, but now I prefer readers to say, "Ok! Yes, but..." I want readers to present small refutations [of my message] or to expand disputes

¹⁸⁹ The online name of the newspaper owner is "Sadobaoro."

[regarding my message]. I'm happy when my issue is expanded and diffused. (personal communication, October 19, 2007)

According to this remark, Sadobaoro expects his thoughts to be “expanded and diffused” through critical interactions with fellow online-talk participants. In posting his thoughts online, from the beginning, he considers himself to be a member of collaborative producers of political discourse.

By recognizing that they participate in producing collective discourse, as shown in Sadobaoro's remark, online-talk participants are transformed from participants in thinking together to collaborative producers of political discourse. This transformation is clearly demonstrated by an online message that an online-talk participant, who uses “Lifepen” as his online name, posted on January 3, 2004. This message has been widely considered to be one of the most famous messages ever posted on *Seoprise*. Many members of *Seoprise* recommended that I should read the message if I want to understand online political talk on the forum. It, they thought, describes the nature of their online discussions. In this message, written in the form of a letter to the then president Roh, Lifepen described his understanding of online political talk as follows:

I'd like to communicate with Mr. President. Why I send this open letter to Mr. President is—that is because something very important happens by the fact alone that ordinary citizens say their own ideas. Please look at something like the miracle that has happened. That is because individual citizen's idea blossoms beyond mere personal opinion into political views and practical ideas through advice and suggestion by other citizens like contemporary brain cells. I dare to call these participatory activities by citizens “the brain of citizens.”...

I am completely sure. Why I am trying to write a letter [to Mr. President] on *Seoprise* is because I believe from my soul that my humble opinion will be developed into the best idea through correction, revision, and polishing by a number of wise citizens. According to the remark, Lifepen believes that his personal idea can be transformed into a collective political discourse through what he calls “something like the miracle,” which refers to the process in which one citizen's idea develop into the best idea through correction, revision, and polishing by fellow citizens. This process is the response that Sadobaoro has expected to receive through posting his messages online. Lifepen's remark suggests that the nature of online

political talk is not just to express personal thoughts and oneself in public or to educate oneself, but to produce collective political discourse.

The above remark also reveals Lifepen's understanding of himself and fellow online-talk participants. He identifies online-talk participants not with particular classes, groups or sects but with citizen as a whole. In his view, citizens are independent judges of public matters, and they are also oriented to rationality and common agreement, rather than individual interests or preferences. Lifepen, thus, believes that their critical communicative interactions would produce the best idea, which can be understood and accepted by fellow online-talk participants. In short, behind the view of online political talk as the collaborative production of political discourse is online-talk participants' two understandings of themselves: as members of citizens as a whole and as independent judges who are oriented to rationality and common agreement. A detailed description of these self-understandings was provided in chapter 6.

Some people may disagree with the forum participants' criticism of the South Korean press for reporting Roh's unofficial suggestion critically. They may think that the forum participants applied fussy critiques to the press in the case. However, regardless of whether the forum participant's criticism of the press was appropriate, this case shows important characteristics of online-talk participants: they engage in thinking together with fellow citizens in public; and through thinking together in public, they seek to form shared understandings and judgments and to produce collective political discourses. They thus try to narrow their disagreement and to reach agreement, even though their efforts frequently lead to hostile communicative interactions. In this sense, online-talk participants are agreement-oriented public communicators.

As shown by the case of "next day, *Cho-Joong-Dong*," they have sometimes been successful in forming shared understandings and judgments and producing collective political discourses. These experiences have led online-talk participants to expect and seek to produce collective political discourses about other public issues. In this process, they are sometimes transformed from critical and wishful political spectators into collective political actors.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I identified a culture of South Korean online-talk participants, which I call *thinking together in public*. In this culture, online-talk participants seek not just to express their thoughts online but also to engage in communicative interactions with fellow citizens. They are interested in fellow citizens' thoughts about public matters, ready to offer their critical responses to these thoughts, willing to expose their thoughts to critical examination, and eager to receive fellow citizens' responses to their thoughts. Through these communicative interactions, they want to think together with fellow citizens about public matters.

But it is not new that citizens try to think together with fellow citizens about public matters. Paul Lazarsfeld and his colleagues (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954; Katz & Lazarsfeld, 2005/1955; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Hazel, 1968/1944) have shown that the interpersonal networks of communication, such as family, friends, neighbors, or social groups, play an important role in the process of making political decisions by citizens. From this view, Elihu Katz and Lazarsfeld have argued that "the opinions and attitudes of individuals are rooted in the social spheres to which they belong" (2005/1955, p. 57). In addition to friendship networks, according to them, shared interest in a given subject is another basis for interpersonal networks of communication, because people want to talk to other people who have the same concerns. People now can use the Internet to seek information and opinions about their interests. It might not be surprising, thus, that citizens who share the same political interests form online communication networks and exchange their political opinions online.

It is necessary, however, to note that the offline interpersonal networks of communication usually build on personal acquaintance. In most cases, thus, this offline network-based political talk is not open to strangers. In contrast, online political talk is usually visible and open to anybody. Online-talk participants, therefore, can hardly avoid talking to strangers with whom they share nothing except for the same interest. They are not so sure of what responses they would receive from these strangers. They may receive no responses or critical and negative responses to their messages. In addition, political talk in a public place can easily turn into contested discussions. Many online-talk participants, nevertheless, are not reluctant to engage in communicative interactions in a public place.

In the thinking-together-in-public culture, online-talk participants not only are willing to engage in communicative interactions in public, but also think that their political talk should be

visible and open to anybody. They consider the visibility and openness of political talk to bolster critical communicative interactions and to help their thoughts spread to a large number of citizens. As this idea shows, online-talk participants also believe that they should engage in critical communicative interactions with fellow citizens. In their view, critical interactions are a central part of thinking together and, as described in chapter 6, a main factor that makes their judgments on public matters legitimate. In short, the culture of thinking together in public is characterized not only by the fact that online-talk participants think together with fellow citizens but also by the fact that they seek to engage in critical interactions in public.

Through engaging in thinking together in public, online-talk participants enlighten themselves and develop their thoughts. But this cultural practice does not just lead to the change of their thoughts. It also transforms their thinking process itself. Jürgen Habermas (1989/1962) has argued that in early modern Europe, letter writing and exchange led to the rise of audience-oriented subjectivity, which provided the basis of the bourgeois public sphere. He described the psychological role of audience-oriented subjectivity as follows:

From the beginning, the psychological interest increased in the dual relation to both one's self and the other: self-observation entered a union partly curious, partly sympathetic with the emotional stirrings of the other I. The diary became a letter addressed to the sender, and the first-person narrative became a conversation with one's self addressed to another person (1989/1962, p. 49).

Similarly, the interaction-oriented culture and the experiences of online interactions have led online-talk participants to associate their thoughts and judgments with fellow participants' responses and to adjust the former to the latter. They thus begin to take fellow online-talk participants' responses into consideration in the process of political thinking. That is, these responses become internalized in their thinking process. Online-talk participants' thinking, accordingly, turns into a conversation with fellow participants' thoughts that would be addressed to them: in Hannah Arendt's phrase (1977/1961), "an anticipated communication with others with whom I know I must finally come to some agreement" (1977/1961, p. 220). Their thinking about public matters, therefore, is related from the very start to publicity and reflection, even though the extent of this reflection is limited to the extent of the diversity of fellow online-talk participants.

The thinking-together-in-public culture also leads online-talk participants to form shared understandings and judgments about public matters and to produce collective political discourses. They exchange political information and discuss public issues and news messages about those issues. News media coverage has an influence on what they discuss online. But it does not frame how they discuss such media agendas. Online-talk participants interpret and evaluate, from their own perspectives, public issues and media messages about the issues and discuss these interpretations and evaluations. Such discussions frequently turn into contentious or hostile interactions. But they are often successful in narrowing their differences, reaching agreement, and, as a consequence, forming shared understandings and judgments. In this process, online-talk participants sometimes produce collective political discourses.

Quite a few researchers of political culture and discussion (Bella et al. 1985; Conover, Searing, & Crewe, 2002; Eliasoph, 1998; Hibbin & Theiss-Morse, 2003) have argued that most American citizens avoid talking about politics in public. In contrast to these American citizens, South Korean online-talk participants are willing to discuss public matters with their critics and strangers in a public place, which is potentially visible to an unlimited audience of citizens-at-large. This is a new change in political culture that has emerged with the rise of the Internet.

Sociologist Nina Eliasoph (1998) has claimed that most American citizens avoid political conversation in public contexts due to their assumptions about public places. According to her, people have their own assumptions about particular social contexts, which describe what they should say or are allowed to talk about in those contexts. American citizens, she has argued, think that they should not—or are not allowed to—talk politics in public places. In contrast to these American citizens, my informants are aware that they are supposed to talk politics on their web forums: in other words, they think they should think together in public. Their assumption of online communicative places is different from the assumption of public places that Eliasoph's American citizens have developed.

It can be considered to be natural, therefore, that my informants discuss public matters in online places designed for political talk. This idea is based on the assumption that citizens are always motivated to conduct political conversation. That is, according to this assumption, citizens would like to talk politics if only they were allowed to do so. People, however, are not born good citizens (Tocqueville, 1961/1835; Dewey, 1927). This is not to say that most citizens are not capable of conducting informed and well-reasoned political discussions (see Gamson,

1992). Alexis de Tocqueville (1961/1835) argued that the barrier to democracy does not always lie in want of the capacity, but want of the desire and the inclination. In fact, many contemporary citizens are not motivated to participate in politics (Bellah et al, 1985; Hibbin & Theiss-Morse, 2003). They moreover are reluctant to discuss public matters in public (Conover, Searing, & Crewe, 2002). From this perspective, my research implies that even though the rise of the Internet may have failed to produce Internet sites in which ideal democratic talk or deliberation is dominant, it has been successful, in South Korea, in provoking the desire and culture for engaging in interaction-centered, critical, public, and agreement-oriented political communication.

Figures and Tables



[Figure 7-1] A cartoon of Jesus version of “next day, Cho-Joong-Dong” that was posted on *Seoprise* on 10 January 2007.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

With the rise of the Internet, many citizens began to talk about contemporary affairs and public issues online. These online-talk participants have posted their replies to news stories, and they have offered their thoughts and feelings about public matters. They have also revealed their responses to fellow online-talk participants' postings. These responses have often developed into conversations, discussions, or contentions. One of the important changes in political communication ushered in by the Internet is to proliferate and expand political talk among ordinary citizens.

But it is nothing particularly new in modern society that ordinary citizens talk about public matters. They have sometimes engaged in political talk with their family members, friends, neighbors, colleagues, or acquaintances in face-to-face meetings and gatherings; some citizens have frequently participated in this sort of political talk (see Bennett, Fisher, & Resnick, 1995; Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954; Brady, 1999; Conover, Searing, & Crewe, 2002; Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955/2005; Keeter, 2002; Kim, Wyatt, & Katz, 1999; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1944/1968; Mansbridge, 1999). Online political talk, however, is not simply an online version of pre-Internet political talk. Unlike the latter, the former is conducted in public places in the sense that it is visible and open to anybody. Online political talk can be exposed to an unlimited audience of citizens-at-large, and it allows anyone to participate. Online-talk participants, as a consequence, cannot avoid criticism and challenges from strangers. Many scholars of communication, democracy, or deliberation have argued that democratic discussion should take place in public places or be conducted among strangers as well as among family members, friends, and acquaintances (see Arendt, 1958; Bohman, 1996; Carey, 1995; Fraser, 1992; Habermas, 1962/1989). Online political talk, thus, can be considered to be closer to ideal democratic discussion or deliberation, in terms of its settings, than pre-Internet political talk.

Yet, as many critics of online political talk have argued, democratic discussion or deliberation does not prevail on Internet sites for political talk. On the web forums I investigated, in fact, postings conveying rational claims are not dominant. Many messages consist of simple information, personal experiences, emotional rants, sarcastic remarks, or even gibberish. Even when messages are persuasive arguments, the quality of these arguments, in my opinion, is

usually no more than mediocre. In addition, many postings are not responded to by other participants. Even when postings receive audience response, they normally garner at most two or three comments. Moreover, when postings bring about active communicative interactions, these interactions, in many cases, turn into flaming. Even when these communicative interactions do not devolve into hostile interactions, most of them do not end by reaching agreements among those who have different opinions. On the forums I studied, it is not rare for a majority of the members to reach agreements with regard to public matters. But this usually results from the fact that they share the same partisan viewpoint. In this sense, critical descriptions of online political talk as “monologue,” “cacophony,” or “echo-chamber” are not completely wrong. Democratic discussion or deliberation is certainly not dominant in online political talk, particularly in terms of its process and outcome.

These limitations and problems of online political talk have been shown by many studies, which have usually concentrated on analyzing messages posted on Internet sites for political talk. Unlike these previous studies, however, my research has focused on online-talk participants’ sense of their communicative actions and interactions. In other words, my research was conducted from the insiders’ viewpoint. This shift in research focus or perspective opens the way to new—in my opinion, more important—faces of online political talk that the previous studies have failed to see.

As mentioned above, current online political talk falls short of ideal democratic discussion or deliberation. But it seems to be successful in making its participants better democratic citizens. The online-talk participants I met said that by participating in online political talk, they had been exposed to new information, clear judgments and persuasive arguments, different opinions and perspectives, agreements and praises, criticism and refutations, conversation and discussion, as well as contentions and clashes. Through these experiences, according to my informants, they have become more informed of public matters and more interested in politics, have come to form clearer and more reasonable judgments on public matters, have come to talk more about public matters with their offline contacts, and have become more aware of the importance of discussion and more willing to participate in politics. In addition, as described in chapter 7, many of my informants feel that on their favorite Internet forums, online political talk is surprising, illuminating, and enjoyable. Of course, the nature of online political talk cannot be determined by its participants’ awareness of it. My study, however,

shows that for online-talk participants in South Korea, online political talk cannot be by any means defined as “monologue,” “cacophony,” or “echo-chamber.”

By studying online political talk from the insiders’ viewpoints, more importantly, my research has clarified the central practices of online-talk participants, has identified changes in their way of thinking about public matters, and has revealed their understandings of their communicative actions and themselves in South Korea.

Online political talk consists of various actions: for example, to provide information and knowledge, to reveal personal feelings and experiences, to offer humor and satire, to click on messages and read them, to deliver feedback to postings, to react to audience response, to express their evaluation of each message by giving a grade or recommendation score, and to transfer postings to other Internet sites. But a central part of online political talk is a social role that I term *citizen polemicism*, which was identified in chapter 4. This role refers to an action of judging public matters, offering such judgments in public, and arguing with fellow citizens. The primary goal of most online-talk participants is to form their judgments on public matters and to share their judgment with fellow citizens.

Judging public matters, along with engaging in communicative interactions, is a key practice of online-talk participants. They do not expect political and social elites—such as politicians, bureaucrats, journalists, or specialists—to judge public matters on behalf of themselves. They try to form their judgments by themselves. In doing so, online-talk participants not only seek information and knowledge from elite public communicators but also are concerned with fellow citizens’ thoughts on public matters. They compare their judgments with fellow citizens’ judgments, evaluate whether fellow citizens’ judgments make sense, and decide which judgments are better than others. They think thus for themselves with regard to public matters.

In thinking for themselves, online-talk participants are not silent, not just in the sense that they reveal their thoughts and judgments in public, but also in the sense that, as mentioned in chapter 4, they offer their temporary judgments, which are open to change. What they reveal is not a final version of their judgments on public matters. They are willing to make judgments on public matters and to offer them in public even though they have limited information and knowledge or even when these public matters are still in the process of evolving. After posting

their judgments online, online-talk participants develop, change, or drop them based on new information, ideas, and understandings.

As online-talk participants think aloud, the nature of their thinking about public matters changes. Their thinking becomes oriented to the formation of thoughts that can be written down: in other word, objectified. As mentioned in chapter 5, thus, their thoughts become clearer—though not necessarily more rational—than thoughts that they formed in their minds. By being objectified, moreover, their thoughts can be sorted out easily and compared to their subsequent thoughts (see Becker, 1986). For online-talk participants, in this sense, thinking is not just a silent internal dialogue. But rather, for them, a part of thinking is interactions between themselves and their objectified thoughts.

Since online-talk participants think aloud, their thoughts can be exposed to and discussed by fellow citizens. As a result, they can think together with fellow citizens. As described in chapter 7, online-talk participants are willing not just to reveal their thoughts but also to think together. They share information, exchange their feelings, and discuss their thoughts. More specifically, they are interested in and attentive to fellow citizens' thoughts, willing to respond to these thoughts, and eager to receive fellow citizens' responses to their thoughts. Through this process, online-talk participants try to form their thoughts, to persuade fellow citizens to accept their thoughts, and to form shared thoughts with fellow citizens.

The more that online-talk participants think together, the harder they think for themselves. The responses that they receive by posting their thoughts online encourage them to think more about public matters. Through their thoughts about public matters, moreover, they are recognized, praised, remembered, and respected by fellow citizens. As illustrated in chapter 5, as a result, their thoughts become considered to represent themselves and to reveal their values. They thus try harder to form their thoughts about public matters and to make them more persuasive.

As online-talk participants think together, they come to think for communication. They expect their thoughts to be understood and agreed upon by fellow citizens. Their thoughts, therefore, no longer depend purely on their private interests, personal preferences, or idiosyncratic ways of thinking. Online-talk participants' thoughts come to resort to something that they share with fellow citizens. This change in thoughts is also reinforced by fellow online-talk participants' moral expectations with regard to how to engage in online political talk. In

South Korea, as described in chapter 7, online-talk participants define their communication actions as *sotong*, which, in its broad sense, refers to communicative action that is oriented to mutual understanding. In this understanding of online political talk, actions of expressing thoughts that are not oriented to fellow citizens' understanding and agreement are considered to be illegitimate communicative actions, which are called *baesul*. This view of online political talk as *sotong*, therefore, forces online-talk participants to form thoughts that do not purely rely on their individual interests, preferences, or ways of thinking. By thinking together, in short, online-talk participants come to orient their thinking toward the formation of thoughts that not only are written down but also appeal to what they share with fellow online-talk participants.

As explicated in chapter 6, my informants think that their thoughts about public matters appeal to common sense—in their term, *sangsik*—which, in their view, refers to reasonable and nonsubjective sense and judgment that common people can understand and accept. In this notion, common sense is based on a rational way of thinking in which people try to evaluate whether claims about public matters are reasonable—specifically, well-grounded and consistent—and accept claims that are more, rather than less, reasonable. But it is not sense and judgments made only by fully enlightened people; rather, it is sense and judgment that can be agreed to by common people who try to make reasonable and impartial judgments of public matters. In this respect, common sense is reason-oriented, though not enlightened, sense and judgment. My informants view common sense as a source of the validity of claims about public matters and also as a foundation of agreement among citizens who have different views of public matters.

This idea of common sense depends on my informants' self-understanding. As mentioned in chapters 6 and 7, they identify themselves primarily with common people—more precisely, citizens as a whole—rather than with members of certain classes, political sects, or social groups.¹⁹⁰ In a South Korean notion of citizenship, which I call *simin* in chapter 6, citizens

¹⁹⁰ The majority of my informants are male online-talk participants. In conducting my study, I talked to 199 male and 54 female online-talk participants. This oversampling of male participants stemmed from the fact that the majority of participants in the web forums I have studied are men. Some people, thus, may think that the forums are not gender-neutral discussion sites. But the forum participants are by no means biased against women. In the forums, new female members are usually more welcomed than male newcomers. The lack of female forum participants has something to do with two features of South Korean online politics. First, the number of male online-talk participants is much larger than that of female participants. Second, many female online-talk participants talk politics on women-only discussion forums, which were not my research sites. In order to understand gender issues in South Korean online politics, it is necessary to explore why fewer women than men engage in online political talk and why many female online-talk participants prefer to talk politics on female forums. These questions, however, are not the research issues on which my study has focused.

are not just non-elite and non-occupational political subjects but also political subjects whose public lives are detached from their socio-economic statuses and interests. Through political participation, *simins* neither make a living from and seek careers nor pursue the interests of their socio-economic positions. They thus are believed to be political subjects who can make reasonable and impartial judgments about public matters. As described in chapter 6, *simins* are also regarded as political equals, not just in the sense that they can be independent, reasonable, and impartial judges about public matters, but also in the sense that they are all separated from their socio-economic positions. In short, the self-understanding as *simin* leads online-talk participants to think of themselves and fellow online-talk participants as voluntary, disinterested, and equal political subjects. Due to this self-understanding, online-talk participants believe that they can engage in common sense-oriented discussion.

Hence, as online-talk participants think together in a manner oriented to common sense, their thoughts, in principle, become oriented to common agreement with citizens as a whole: more precisely, to being understood and accepted by all citizens who try to make reasonable and impartial judgments of public matters. They come to provide the ideas of why their thoughts are reasonable and more persuasive than others. In this respect, as mentioned in chapter 4, online-talk participants' thoughts—specifically, judgments—are distinguished from individual opinions as privately held judgments, which are mostly expressed as response to survey questions, in informal and spontaneous talk settings, or through voting.

Online-talk participants think together not just in a manner oriented to common sense but also in a critical manner. This stems, to a great extent, from the fact that, as explained in chapter 7, they think critically in two senses. First, they are critical in understanding news stories and fellow citizens' thoughts; and they are willing to reveal their critical responses. The main source of this critical thinking lies in the fact that online-talk participants think for themselves: more precisely, make judgments on public matters. As described in chapter 4, judging public matters is inherently connected to critical evaluations of different interpretations and judgments. Online-talk participants, thus, are required to critically evaluate news stories and fellow citizens' thoughts.

Second, online-talk participants think critically, in the sense that they expose their thoughts to the test of critical examination. They not only submit their thoughts to the judgment of fellow citizens, but also react to fellow citizens' critical responses to their thoughts. They

believe that they should engage in discussion and debate with fellow citizens. An important source of this belief lies in the fact that online-talk participants view their communicative actions as *sotong*: mutual understanding-oriented actions. Due to their identification with citizens as a whole, they think they should engage in *sotong* not just with fellow citizens who have similar views and perspectives, but also with fellow citizens who have different views and perspectives. Another source of the belief is that, as illustrated in chapter 6, online-talk participants consider critical communicative interactions among citizens to result in a commonsensical voice. In their view, individual citizens' thoughts can be turned into commonsensical thoughts through critical interactions. The view of online political talk as *sotong* and the idea of critical interactions as a linchpin of a commonsensical voice lead online-talk participants to believe that they should engage in discussion and debate with fellow citizens.

Online-talk participants think together in a critical manner, not just because they think critically, but also because they think together in public places. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, online political talk is visible and open to anybody. This context makes online-talk participants' thoughts wide open to criticism and challenges from strangers, and it easily turns online political talk into contested discussion. In fact, my informants think that they should think together in public because they believe it will bolster critical communicative interactions.

Online-talk participants, in brief, think together with fellow citizens in a critical manner and in public places. In chapter 7, I named this communicative practice *thinking together in public*. Through this practice, online-talk participants have the opportunity to prove that their thoughts are better than others and to test whether fellow online-talk participants' thoughts make sense. They also come to view their thoughts from others' points of view (see Arendt, 1961/1977, 1982). As a result, on the one hand, online-talk participants can see the prejudices and limitations of their thoughts, leading to self-enlightenment; on the other hand, as mentioned in chapter 7, their thinking itself is transformed into anticipated dialogue with their potential critics. By the culture of thinking together in public, in short, online-talk participants are required to take others' standpoints into consideration in forming their thoughts. Their thoughts, thus, are likely to become more impartial.

The thinking-together-in-public culture changes not just online-talk participants' thinking but also their subjectivity. Through practicing this culture, as described in chapter 7, they often enlighten themselves, form shared understandings and judgments about public matters,

and produce collective political discourses. These experiences lead online-talk participants to take pleasure in practicing the culture. They thus come to seek to think together in a critical manner and in public places. With the collaborative production of political discourses, in addition, they are transformed from participants in critical and public communication into producers of collective discourse: that is, from critical and wishful political spectators into collaborative political actors. This political identity is one of the factors that have sometimes mobilized online-talk participants to take the streets in South Korea.

For the online-talk participants I investigated, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, their communicative actions are not just pleasure-seeking activities but self-presentation activities. They also regard their communicative actions as participatory political activities. They moreover consider critical and public communicative interactions with fellow citizens to be a necessary part of political participation and good politics. In this respect, my informants are not different from Athenian citizens in Athenian politician Pericles's sense.

In his famous Funeral Oration, Pericles made an oft-quoted statement about Athenian citizens:

Our public men have, besides politics, their private affairs to attend to, and our ordinary citizens, though occupied with the pursuits of industry, are still fair judges of public matters; for, unlike any other nation, we regard the citizen who takes no part in these duties not as unambitious but as useless, and we are able to judge proposals even if we cannot originate them; instead of looking on discussion as a stumbling-block in the way of action, we think it an indispensable preliminary way to wise action at all. (Thucydides, 1996, 2.40.2)

In this remark, Pericles conveyed three features of Athenian citizens' political consciousness: first, these citizens thought that they should participate in judging public matters; second, they believed in their capability to make political judgment; third, they considered political discussion to be a necessary condition for wise political actions.

Unlike Athenian citizens in the above remark, my informants do not have an extremely negative opinion of citizens who fail to do the business to judge public matters. As shown in chapter 5, however, they think that it is their civic mission to judge public matters and to discuss them with fellow citizens including their critics and strangers. As mentioned above, they also believe that they can make reasonable and impartial judgments on public matters. My informants,

in addition, consider their critical interactions to make politics better by bringing common sense to politics.

In sum, online-talk participants primarily seek to judge public matters and to share them with fellow citizens. In doing so, they think for themselves, think aloud, and think together with fellow citizens in a critical manner and in public places. My informants identify themselves in the first place with *simins* as a whole: more specifically, with all *simins* who try to make reasonable and impartial judgments on public matters. They also regard fellow online-talk participants as equal, voluntary, and disinterested political subjects. In addition, my informants believe that in thinking together with fellow citizens, they should engage in critical, open, and common sense-oriented discussion. In terms of their action and self-understanding, thus, they constitute the public, which I term *the simin public*.

In reality, however, online-talk participants cannot think together with all citizens who try to make reasonable and impartial judgments on public matters. They actually come to think together with certain groups of people with whom they form communicative networks. These groups of people are almost always different from citizens as a whole in terms of their socio-economic backgrounds and political orientations. In many cases, moreover, the groups of people share similar political perspectives. Online-talk participants' thoughts, thus, become oriented to dominant views and perspectives in the groups, rather than to common sense. In this respect, online political talk is not different from pre-Internet political talk; and online-talk participants can be thought of not as members of the public but as partisans.

As described above, however, one of the central characteristics of online-talk participants is their belief that they should engage in critical, open, and common sense-oriented discussion. The actual course of online political talk has always departed from this ideal principle of political talk. But the principle has served as a guide to online political talk. In my informants' view, political talk on their favorite forums is better than political talk on other forums because their favorite forums offer political talk that is closer to critical, open, and commonsensical discussion. They also consider some online-talk participants to be better than others because they believe these participants expose their thoughts to critical, open, and common sense-oriented discussion. When they think that their forums or fellow online-talk participants deviate far away from this ideal principle of political talk, they criticize these forums or fellow participants. In short, the principle of critical, open, and common sense-oriented discussion has a steering effect on the

course of online political talk. In this respect, online political talk is distinguished from pre-Internet political talk, and online-talk participants are separated from partisans.

As mentioned at the outset of this chapter, online political talk differs from pre-Internet political talk in terms of its frequency, scale, and context. According to my study, as summarized above, online-talk participants' consciousness of themselves and political talk is also something new. As many researchers who are critical of online political talk have argued, it may be true that the Internet does not yet lead to the *places for online talk and discussion* that conform to the ideal requirements for democratic political talk or deliberation. But my study shows that online political talk has led to the rise of subjectivity that characterizes the *simin* public.

The Internet has played crucial roles in giving rise to the *simin* public, although the rise of the latter cannot be reduced to the technological characteristics of the former. By creating an open communication space that is, according to James Carey (1997/1991), necessary for public life in modern society, this new technology makes it possible for ordinary citizens to discuss public matters with fellow citizens in a public place. In discussing how to restore public life in America, Carey argued, "We must turn to the task of creating a public realm in which free people assemble, speak their minds, and then write or tape or otherwise record the extended conversation so that others, out of sight, might see it" (pp. 226–227).

The technological features of the Internet, moreover, serve to vitalize political talk on the Internet-based communication space in three ways. First, the Internet enables ordinary citizens to access information easily and to express their feelings and thoughts immediately. These features, as mentioned in chapter 5, make it easy for citizen to form and express their thoughts about public matters.

Second, the Internet nurtures online conversations and discussions by narrowing the temporal and spatial distance between message and audience response, which, in the pre-Internet age, inhibited audience members from revealing their responses. On the Internet-based communication space, audience members are allowed to reveal their responses to messages immediately after the messages are posted. Their responses can also be posted together with the messages in the same online space. As described in chapter 3, furthermore, the design of the message-response association removes the spatial distance not only between message and audience response but also among audience members' various responses. These technical traits, on the one hand, encourage audience members to post their comments on messages and, on the

other hand, pressure message posters to respond to the comments. Hence, the Internet increases audience response, the interaction between a message poster and audience, and the interplay among audience members.

The third way that the Internet serves to animate online political talk is its contribution to turning communicative interactions into critical debates or clashes between citizens with opposite political views. The potential openness and visibility of the Internet-based communication space to anyone makes it difficult for online message posters to avoid critical responses. As mentioned above, the collapse of the temporal and spatial distance between message and audience response compel posters of the former to react to the latter: in particular, critical response. In the Internet-based communication space, moreover, thoughts are expressed and recorded in typed messages. Thoughts posted online, thus, can be read and reread carefully. As a consequence, it is easier to analyze and criticize them. Online communication space is also devoid of immediate actual presence of communication partners. Online-talk participants, therefore, are freer from social pressure to conform to communication partners' opinions than participants in face-to-face political talk. These technological features of the Internet, as explained in chapter 7, boost contentious communicative interactions.

In addition to the technological characteristics of the Internet-based communication space, citizens' experience on this communication space contributes to invigorating online political talk, in particular by increasing certain interests and desires. After the rise of the Internet, many citizens became concerned, on a daily basis, with fellow citizens' thoughts about public matters and responses to elite public communicators' messages. This new daily interest has driven them to pay more attention to online political talk. As mentioned in chapter 5 and 7, moreover, quite a few citizens became interested in and attentive to what other citizens think about their thoughts about public matters. They therefore post their political thoughts online not just because they want to reveal their thoughts in public, but also because they are curious about fellow citizens' responses to their thoughts. By posting their thoughts online, as shown in chapter 5, some online-talk participants came to garner much attention and respect from fellow citizens. The possibility and experience of receiving these reactions have stimulated online-talk participants to have the desire of gaining attention and respect by revealing their thoughts in public. This desire motivates many online-talk participants to make more efforts on forming and writing their thoughts about public matters. The desire also encourages them to try to form and express their

thoughts about various public issues beyond what they are already familiar with. Besides, in described in chapter 7, quite a few online-talk participants came to take pleasure in engaging in critical communicative interactions with strangers and producing collective political discourses. Such pleasure leads online-talk participants to be more active in political talk. In short, the exposure to and participation in online political talk has molded new motivations that induce quite a few citizens to be keen spectators of and further active participants in online political talk.

The Internet, as described above, serves not just to produce the open communication space but also to invigorate political talk on the space. Its contribution to the rise of the *simin* public, however, is not limited to the creation and vitalization of the new communication space. According to my study, the Internet also has influence on shaping online-talk participants' understandings of their communicative actions and themselves, which constitute the subjectivity of the *simin* public.

Before the rise of the Internet, many participants in online political talk had seldom engaged in political talk. Even when they sometimes talked politics, they did not regard their political talk as political participation. In the pre-Internet age, political talk was usually considered nothing more than personal and private activity. However, as citizens started engaging in online political talk, these online-talk participants have come to view their communicative action as participatory political activity, rather than as a personal hobby.

This change in online-talk participants' notion of political talk has stemmed, in part, from the fact that the Internet-based communication space is potentially open and visible to anybody. Due to this technical trait, online-talk participants believe that their political talk takes place in a public place. The trait also makes it possible for online message posters to receive visible responses from other citizens and to reach a large number of citizens. As described in chapter 7, therefore, online-talk participants' arguments sometimes develop into collective political discourses. Since online-talk participants experience and observe the visible response from audience, the exposure of online messages to a large number of citizens, and the development of individual opinion into collective discourse, they think that their political talk is influential on politics. In short, the openness and visibility of the Internet-based communication space to anybody lead online-talk participants to view their political talk as politically effective and public action.

As previously described, online-talk participants regard their communicative action not just as participatory political activity but also as activity to reveal their worth or abilities in the world. This sense of online political talk has been shaped partially by the fact that on the Internet-based communication space, citizens communicate through typed messages without revealing their offline identities. On this communication space, thus, individual citizens are identified primarily through their thoughts that are typed and recorded in texts. As described in chapter 5, this objectification of thoughts forces online-talk participants to develop their vague feelings and senses about public matters into clearer and more persuasive arguments. As a result, online-talk participants come to be clearly identified and easily distinguished from other participants by their thoughts about public matters. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, therefore, they consider their political thoughts to define and represent themselves.

The Internet has played an important role in molding online-talk participants' self-understanding as well as notion of their communication action. As illustrated in chapter 7, they regard themselves as collective political subjects. The two technical features of the Internet-based communication space contributes to the rise of this self-understanding by helping online-talk participants recognize easily and clearly that they are taking part in the production of collective political discourses through exchanging their ideas and opinions with other ordinary people. First, the Internet makes it possible for citizens' collective discourses to be produced in a very short time and with an expansive effect. Second, on the Internet-based communication space, individual citizens' thoughts are transformed into collective political discourses through messages and responses that are typed and recorded in texts. These features make the "collective" process of the production of collective discourse visible to participants in the process.

The Internet also helps online-talk participants view themselves as *simins*. As mentioned above, online communication space hides offline identities of online-talk participants. They thus cannot be identified by their socio-economic positions. As a consequence, they are regarded as political subjects who are not distinguished by their social-economic positions. This condition of online-talk participants has affinity with a South Korean notion of citizenship, which I call *simins*. This affinity contributes to leading online-talk participants to consider themselves *simins* rather than other South Korean notions of ordinary citizens as collective political subjects.

Many studies of the Internet's influence on politics have focused on the fact that this new technology provides ordinary citizens with new opportunities for and abilities of public

communication. For example, the Internet allows citizens to convey their information and thoughts to a large number of fellow citizens. It also makes it too easy for citizens to form communication networks with a considerable number of fellow citizens and to engage in conversation with them. As exemplified in chapter 7, as a result, the Internet has improved, to a great extent, citizens' capability of collaborative production and collective action. My research, however, has shown that the Internet's influence on politics is not limited to the fact that it merely provides citizens with new capabilities for political communication. The Internet shapes and nurtures specific types of communicative actions, new desires and interests, and online-talk participants' understandings of their communicative actions and themselves. These changes bolster the vitalization of online political talk among ordinary citizens and contribute to transforming online-talk participants into members of the public.

In addition to displaying the rise of the subjectivity of the *simin* public and depicting the Internet's contribution to this political and cultural change, my research has been designed to explore how individual citizens is transformed into members of the *simin* public. In investigating this research issue, my study has revealed the roles of the active public communicators who engage in citizen polemicism. By actions of judging public matters and offering such judgments in public, as illustrated in chapter 4, citizen polemicists provoke fellow citizens to form and reveal their thoughts about public matters and, as a consequence, produce criticism, discussion, contention, and clash among citizens. By actions of arguing with their audiences, moreover, citizen polemicists intensify these critical and contentious communicative interactions. In the process of these interactions, citizens are transformed into both judges of public matters and participants in political discussion. In short, citizen polemicists serve as triggers and catalysts for transformation of citizens into members of the public.

My study has also ascertained online-talk participants' motivations for engaging in political discussion. As introduced in chapter 2, John Dewey, Hannah Arendt, and Jürgen Habermas each have emphasized one or two main motivations in their models of the public: in Dewey's model, the common interest of community; in Arendt's model, public freedom and happiness; in Habermas's model, discussion-oriented sociability and economic interests. Unlike the three models of the public, as described in chapters 5 and 7, my informants are motivated to participate in online political discussion by various factors, which include the motivations suggested by the three scholars but are not reduced to them. These factors include complaints

about mainstream news media, disagreement with authoritative or popular opinions on certain public issues, commitment to political or social causes, an expectation of self-enlightenment, a desire to be praised and respected, interest in fellow citizens' thoughts on public matters, pleasure of communicative interactions, a wish to form shared understandings and judgments about public matters, a desire of participating in collective political action, and a civic mission. These motivations, as discussed in chapters 3, 5, and 7, build upon an association between the social, political, and cultural context of South Korea and the technological features of the Internet-based communication space.

Another key factor in the transformation of online-talk participants into members of the *simin* public is their political imagination: specifically, their self-understanding as *simins*. In this South Korean notion of citizenship, as described in chapters 5 and 6, common people are regarded as political subjects who should serve the public good through political participation and whose political lives are detached from their socio-economic statuses and interests. As previously mentioned in this chapter, this self-understanding serves as foundation of my informants' identification with citizen as a whole, of their perception that fellow online-talk participants are equal, voluntary, and disinterested political subjects, and of their belief that it is desirable and possible to engage in open, critical and common sense-oriented discussion.

The self-understanding as *simins*, as described in chapter 5, also leads my informants to view their communicative action about public matters as a civic mission. As shown in chapters 5 and 7, this view makes my informants develop a moral sense with regard to online political talk. In this moral sense, they believe that it is their duty to engage in critical, open, and common sense-oriented discussion. Online-talk participants' self-understanding as *simins*, thus, pressures them to engage in critical, open, and common sense-oriented discussion.

As exemplified by these roles of the South Korean notion of citizenship, political imagination is a central factor in the transformation of citizens into members of the *simin* public. In the models of the public suggested by Arendt and Habermas, in fact, political imagination plays a crucial role in the rise of the public. For example, Arendt presented Athenian citizens' worldview as a main source of their motivation for engaging in political discussion; Habermas has claimed that the rise of the bourgeois public stemmed mainly from its members' identification with common human beings: more specifically, public users of reason.

James Carey described this importance of political imagination in an effective and succinct way. He pointed out that the recovery of public life is an attempt “to invigorate a conception, illusion or ideal that once had the capacity to engage the imagination, motivate action, and serve an ideological purpose” (1995, p. 373). “Public life,” he continued, “refers to an illusion of the possible rather than to something with a given anterior existence” (p. 373). Even though Carey did not specify this “illusion of the possible,” it includes identification with citizen as a whole, a sense of humans as commonsensical or rational beings, a perception of fellow citizens as equal, voluntary, and disinterested political subjects, and a belief that political discussion among citizens can have influence on politics (see Chartier, 1992/1990; Mah, 2000; Warner, 1990).

Quite a few South Korean citizens have been transformed into members of the *simin* public mainly because they have developed an illusion of the public. The South Korean notion of citizenship has served as foundation of this illusion. The rise of the latter, however, is not reduced to the former. As previously described in this chapter, the Internet has played important roles once again in fostering the illusion of the public. In this sense, the rise of the *simin* public is an outcome of a political and cultural change ushered in by a new media-society association.

References

- Abelmann, N. (1995). Minjung movements and the minjung: Organizers and farmers in a 1980s farmers' movement. In K. M. Wells (Ed.), *South Korea's minjung movement: The culture and politics of dissidence* (pp. 119–153). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Abelmann, N. (1996). *Echoes of the past, epics of dissent: A South Korean social movement*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Abelmann, N., Park, S. J., & Kim, H. (2009). College rank and neo-liberal subjectivity in South Korea: The burden of self-development. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 10(2), 229–247.
- Ackerman, B. (1989). Why dialogue? *Journal of Philosophy*, 86, 5–22.
- Albrecht, S. (2006). Whose voice is heard in online deliberation?: A study of participation and representation in political debate on the Internet. *Information, Communication & Society* 9(1), 62–82.
- Alexander, S. (1994). Women, class and sexual differences in the 1830s and 1840s: Some reflections on the writing of a feminist history. In N. B. Dikrs, G. Eley, & S. B. Ortnr (Eds.), *Culture/ Power/ History: A reader of contemporary social theory* (pp. 269–296). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Allan, S. (2004). The culture of distance: Online reporting of the Iraq War. In S. Allan & B. Zelizer (eds.), *Reporting war: Journalism in wartime* (pp. 347–365). London: Routledge.
- Altschull, J. H. (1990). *From Milton to McLuhan: The ideas behind American journalism*. New York: Longman.
- Al-Saggaf, Y. (2006). The online public sphere in the Arab world: The war in Iraq on the Al Arabiya website. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12(1), article 16. Retrieved March 20, 2008, from <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol12/issue1/al-saggaf.html>.
- Armstrong, C. K. (2005). Introduction. In *Korean society: Civil society, democracy, and the state* (2nd ed.) (pp. 1–8). New York: Routledge.
- Armstrong, C. K. (Ed.), (2005). *Korean society: Civil society, democracy and the state* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Armstrong, C. K. (2008). Contesting the peninsula. *New Left Review*, 51(3): 115–135.
- Anderson, B. (1993). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the Origins and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Anderson, C. (2006). *The long tail: Why the future of business is selling less of more*. New York: Hyperion.

- Arendt, H. (1953). Understanding and politics. *Partisan Review*, 20, 377–392.
- Arendt, H. (1973). *The origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: A Harvest Book. (Original work published 1951).
- Arendt, H. (1958). *The human condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Arendt, H. (1977). The crisis in culture: Its social and its political significance. In *Between past and future* (pp. 197–226). New York: Penguin Books. (Original work published 1961).
- Arendt, H. (1977). Truth and politics. In *Between past and future* (pp. 227–264). New York: Penguin Books. (Original work published 1967).
- Arendt, H. (1990). *On revolution*. New York: Penguin Books. (Original work published 1963).
- Arendt, H. (1977). Public rights and private interests: In response to Charles Frankel. In J. Gutmann (Ed.), *Small comforts for hard times: Humanists on public policy* (pp. 103–108). New York: Columbia University Press.
- Arendt, H. (1982) Lectures on Kant's political philosophy. In R. Beiner (Ed.), *Hannah Arendt: Kant's political philosophy* (pp. 7–78). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Arendt, H. (2004). Philosophy and politics. *Social Research*, 71(3), 427–454. (Original work published 1990).
- Aristotle. (1991). Rhetoric. In G. A. Kenedy (Ed.), *Aristotle on Rhetoric: A theory of civic discourse* (pp. 25–282). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of American Institute of Planners*, 35(4), 216–224.
- Atton, C. (2009). Alternative and citizen journalism. In K. Wahl-Jorgensen & T. Hanitzsch (Eds.), *The handbook of journalism studies* (pp. 265–278). New York: Routledge.
- Axford, B. & Huggins, R. (Eds.). (2001). *New media and politics*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Ayres, J. M. (1999). From the streets to the Internet: The cyber-deffusion of contention. *The Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 566(1), 132-143.
- Bachrach, P. (1967). *The theory of democratic elitism: A critique*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company.
- Baker, K. M. (1990). *Inventing the French Revolution*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Baker, K. M. (1992). Defining the public sphere in Eighteenth-century France: Variations on a theme by Habermas. In C. Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere* (pp. 181–211). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

- Balocchi, G. (2003). Emergent public spheres: Talking politics in participatory governance. *American Sociological Review*, 68(1), 52–74.
- Barash, J. A. (1997). The political dimension of the public world: On Hannah Arendt's Interpretation of Martin Heidegger. In L. May & J. Kohn (Eds.), *Hannah Arendt: Twenty years later* (pp. 251–268). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Barber, B. R. (1984). *Strong democracy: Participatory politics for a new age*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Barber, B. R. (1997). The new telecommunications technology: Endless frontier or the end of democracy? *Constellations*, 4(2), 208–223.
- Barnhurst, K. G. & Nerone, J. (2001). *The form of news: A history*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Becker, H. (1986). *Writing for social scientists: How to start and finish your thesis, book, or article*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Beiner, R. (1982). Hannah Arendt on judging. In R. Beiner (Ed.), *Hannah Arendt: Kant's political philosophy* (pp. 89–156). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Beiner, R. (1983). *Political judgment*. London: Methuen.
- Beiner, R. (Ed.). (1995). *Theorizing citizenship*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Beiner, R. & Nedelsky, J. (Eds.), (2001). *Judgment, imagination, and politics: Themes from Kant and Arendt*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Bellah, R., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W. M., Swidler, A., & Tipton, S. M. (1985). *Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Benjamin, W. (1968). The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction. In *Illustrations* (pp. 219–253). New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.
- Bellow, S. (1994). The distracted public. In *It all adds up: From the dim past to the uncertain future*, pp. 153–169, New York: Viking
- Benhabib, S. (1986). *Critique, norm, and utopia: A study of the foundations of critical theory*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Benhabib, S. (1992). Models of public space: Hannah Arendt, the liberal tradition, and Jürgen Habermas. In C. Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere* (pp. 73–98). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Bennett, W. L., Gressett, L. A., & Haltom, W. (1985). Repairing the news: A case study of the news paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 35(2), 50–68.

- Bentivegna, S. (2002). Politics and new media. In L. A. Lievrouw & S. Livingstone (Eds.), *Handbook of new media: Social shaping and consequences of ICTs* (pp. 50–61). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Berelson, B. R., Lazarsfeld, P. F., & McPhee, W. N. (1954). *Voting: A study of opinion formation in a presidential campaign*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Bernstein, R. J. (1986). *Philosophical profiles*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Bernstein, R. J. (1996). The retrieval of the democratic ethos. *Cardozo Law Review*, 17(4–5), 1127–1146.
- Biehl, J., Good, B., & Kleinman, A. (2007). Introduction: Rethinking subjectivity. In J. Biehl, B. Good, & A. Kleinman (Eds.), *Subjectivity: Ethnographic investigations* (pp. 1–23). Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Biernacki, R. (1999). Method and metaphor after the New Cultural History. In V. E. Bonnell & L. Hunt (Eds.), *Beyond the cultural turn*, (pp. 62–92). Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
- Biddle, B. J. (1986). Recent developments in role theory. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 12, 67–92.
- Biggs, M. (2005). Protest by self-immolation, 1963–2002. In D. Gambetta (Ed.), *Making sense of suicide mission* (pp. 173–208). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bimber, B. (1998). The Internet and political transformation: Populism, community, and accelerated pluralism. *Polity*, 31(1), 133–61.
- Bimber, B. (1999). The Internet and citizen communication with government: Does the medium matter? *Political Communication*, 16, 409–428.
- Bimber, B. (2000). The study of information technology and civic engagement. *Political Communication*, 17, 329–333.
- Bimber, B. (2003). *Information and American democracy: Technology in the evolution of political power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Black, D. (1979). Common sense in the sociology of law. *American Sociological Review*, 44(1), 18–27.
- Blake, C., & Phelps, Cr. (1994). History as social criticism: Conversations with Christopher Lasch. *The Journal of American History*, 80(4), 1310–32.
- Blumer, H. (1946). Part four: Collective behavior. In A. M. Lee (Ed.), *New outline of the principles of sociology* (pp. 165–222). New York: Barnes & Noble, INC.

- Blumler, J. G. & Gurevitch, M. (1995). Toward a comparative framework for political communication research. In *The crisis of public communication* (pp. 59–72). London: Routledge. (Original work published in 1975)
- Boczkowski, P. J. (2002). The development and use of online newspapers: What research tells us and what we might want to know. In L. A. Lievrouw & S. Livingstone (Eds.), *Handbook of new media: Social shaping and consequences of ICTs* (pp. 270–286). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Boczkowski, P. J. (2005). *Digitizing the news: Innovation in online newspapers*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Bohman, J. (1996). *Public deliberation: Pluralism, complexity, and democracy*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Boltanski, L. (1999). *Distant suffering: Morality, media and politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Boudon, R. (1986). *Theories of social change: A critical appraisal*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1978). *Outline of a theory of practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1972).
- Briggs, A. & Burke, P. (2010). *A social history of the media: From Gutenberg to the Internet* (3rd ed.). Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Brouwer, D. C., & Squires, C. R. (2003). Public intellectuals, public life, and the university. *Argumentation and Advocacy*, 39(3), 201–213.
- Browning, G. (1996). *Electronic democracy: Using the Internet to influence American politics*. Wilton, CT: Pemberton.
- Buchstein, H. (1997). Bytes that bite: The Internet and deliberative democracy. *Constellations*, 4(2), 248–263.
- Buell, E. H., Jr. (1975). Eccentrics or gladiators? People who write about politics in letters-to-the-editor. *Social Science Quarterly*, 56(3): 440–449.
- Burkeman, O. (2005, Nov. 17). The new commentariat. Retrieved August 19, 2009 from The Guardian: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2005/nov/17/newmedia.politicsandthemedia>.
- Burt, S. (1993). The politics of virtue today: A critique and a proposal. *American Political Science Review*, 87(2), 360–368.
- Burt, S. (1995). Civic virtue and self-interest: response. *American Political Science Review*, 89(1), 48–51.
- Cahill, S. E. (1998). Toward a sociology of the person. *Sociological Theory*, 16(2), 131–148.

- Calhoun, C. (1992a). (Ed.). *Habermas and the public sphere*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Calhoun, C. (1992b). Introduction: Habermas and the public sphere. In C. Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere* (pp. 1–50). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Calhoun, C. & McGowan, J. (Eds.), (1997). *Hannah Arendt & The meaning of politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Callero, P. L. (2003). The sociology of the self. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 29, 115–133.
- Cammaerts, B. & Audenhove, L. V. (2005). Online political debate, unbounded citizenship, and the problematic nature of a transnational public sphere. *Political Communication*, 22(2), 179–196.
- Caplan, B. (2007). *The myth of the rational voter: Why democracies choose bad policies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Cappella, J. N., Price, V., & Nir, L. (2002). Argument repertoire as a reliable and valid measure of opinion quality: Electronic dialogue during campaign 2000. *Political Communication*, 19, 73–93.
- Carey, J. W. (1986). The dark continent of American journalism. In K. Manoff & M. Schudson (Eds.), *Reading the news* (pp. 146–196). New York: Pantheon Books.
- Carey, J. W. (1989). *Communication as culture: Essays on media and society*. Winchester, MA: Unwin Hyman.
- Carey, J. W. (1995). The press, public opinion, and public discourse. In T. L. Glasser & C. T. Salmon (Eds.), *Public opinion and the communication of consent* (pp. 373–402). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Carey, J. W. (1997a). “A republic, if you can keep it”: Liberty and public life in the age of Glasnost. In E. S. Munson and C. A. Warren (Eds.), *James Carey: A critical reader* (pp. 207–227). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Carey, J. W. (1997b). Afterword: The culture in question. In E. S. Munsen & C. A. Warren (Eds.), *James Carey: A critical reader* (pp. 308–339). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Carey, J. W. (1999). In defense of public journalism. In T. L. Glasser (Ed.), *The idea of public journalism* (pp. 49–66). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Carey, J. W. (2002). American journalism in, before, and after September 11. In B. Zelizer & S. Allan (Eds.), *Journalism after September 11* (pp. 71–90). Routledge: New York.
- Carey, J. W. (2005). Historical pragmatism and the internet. *New Media & Society*, 7(4), 443–455.

- Carey, J., & Kreiling, A. L. (1973). Popular culture and uses and gratifications: Notes toward an accommodation. In J. G. Blumler & E. Katz (Eds.), *The uses of mass communications: Current perspectives on gratifications research* (pp. 225–248). Beverly Hill, CA: SAGE Publications, INC.
- Carson, M. (2007). Blogs and journalistic authority: The role of blogs in U.S. election day 2004 coverage. *Journalism Studies*, 8(2), 264–279.
- Chadwick, A. (2006). *Internet politics: States, citizens, and new communication technologies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chambers, S. (1995). Discourse and democratic practices. In S. K. White (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Habermas* (pp. 233–259). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chang, W-Y. (2005). Online civic participation, and political empowerment: Online media and public opinion formation in Korea. *Media, Culture & Society*, 27(6), 925–936.
- Chartier, R. (1991). *The cultural origins of the French Revolution*. (L. G. Cochrane, Trans.). Durham: Duke University Press. (Original work published 1990)
- Choe, S-H. (2008, June 11). South Koreans assail U.S. pact, shaking leader. *New York Times*, Section A, P. 1.
- Choi, J. J. (1989). *Labor and the authoritarian state: Labor unions in South Korean manufacturing industries, 1961–1980*. Seoul: Korea University Press.
- Choi, J. J. (2005) Democracy after democratization: The Korean experience. (K. Lee, Trans.). Seoul: Humanita. (Original work published in 2002)
- Christen, C. T., Kannaovakun, P., & Gunter, A. C. (2002). Hostiel media perceptions: Partisan assessment of press and public during the 1997 UPS strike. *Political Communication*, 19, 423–436.
- Christians, C. G. (2005). Media ethics in education. *Journalism & Communication Monographs*, 9(4), 178–221.
- Christians, C. G., & Carey, J. W. (1989). The logic and aims of qualitative research. In G. H. I. Stempel & B. H. Westley (Eds.), *Research methods in mass communication* (pp. 354–374). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Christians, C. G., Ferre, J. P., & Fackler, P. M. (1993). *Good news: Social ethics and the press*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Clark, D. N. (2005). Protestant Christianity and the state: Religious organizations as civil society. In C. K. Armstrong (Eds.), *Korean society: Civil society, democracy, and the state* (pp. 167–186). New York: Routledge.
- Clifford, J. (1983). On anthnographic authority. *Representations*, 2, 118-146.

- Clifford, J. & Marcus, G. E. (Ed.). (1986). *Writing culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cohen, J. (1997). Deliberation and political legitimacy. In J. Bohman & W. Rehg (Eds.), *Deliberative democracy: Essays on reason and politics* (pp. 67–92). Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Coleman, S. & Wright, S. (2008). Political blogs and representative democracy. *Information Polity*, 13, 1–5.
- Collier, D. (1995). Translating quantitative methods for qualitative researchers: The case of selection bias. *American Political Science Review*, 89(2), 461–466.
- Collier, D. & Mahoney, J. (1996). Research note—Insights and pitfalls: Selection bias in qualitative research, *World Politics*, 49(1), 56–91.
- Conover, P. J., Searing, D. D., & Crewe, I. M. (2002). The deliberative potential of political discussion. *British Journal of Political Science*, 32, 21–62.
- Conway, J. C., & Rubin, A. M. (1991). Psychological predictors of television viewing motivation. *Communication Research*, 18, 443–464.
- Crittenden, J. (1971). Democratic functions of the open mike radio forum. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 35(2), 200–10.
- Cumings, B. (1997). *Korea's place in the sun: A modern history*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Cumings, B. (2005). Civil society in West and East. In C. K. Armstrong (Eds.), *Korean society: Civil society, democracy, and the state* (pp. 9–32). New York: Routledge.
- Dalh, R. A. 1989. *Democracy and its critics*. London: Yale University Press.
- Dahlberg, L. (2004). Net-public sphere research: Beyond the “first phase.” *Javnost the Public* 11(1), 27–44.
- Dahlberg, L. (2007). Rethinking the fragmentation of the cyberpublic: From consensus to contestation. *New Media & Society* 9(5), 827–847.
- Dahlgren, P. (2000a). The Internet and the democratization of civic culture. *Political Communication*, 17, 335–340.
- Dahlgren, P. (2000b). Media, citizenship, and civic culture. In J. Curran & M. Gurevitch (Eds.), *Mass media and society* (3rd ed., pp. 310–328). London: Arnold.
- Dahlgren, P. (2001a). The public sphere and the Net: Structure, space and communication. In W. L. Bennet & R. M. Entman (Eds.), *Mediated politics: Communication in the future of democracy* (pp. 33–55). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Dahlgren, P. (2001b). The transformation of democracy. In B. Axford and R. Huggins (Eds.), *New media and politics* (pp. 64–88). London: SAGE Publications.
- Dahlgren, P. (2005). The Internet, public spheres, and political communication: Dispersion and deliberation. *Political Communication*, 22, 147–162.
- Dalton, R. J., Beck, P. A., & Huckfeldt, R. (1998). Partisan cues and the media: Information flows in the 1992 presidential election. *The American Political Science Review*, 92(1), 111–126.
- Darnovski, M., Epstein, B. L., & Flacks, R. (Eds.). (1995). *Cultural politics and social movements*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Darnton, R. (1975). Writing news and telling stories. *Daedalus*, 104(2), 175–194.
- Darnton, R. (1984). *The great cat massacre and other episodes in French cultural history*. New York: Basic Book, Inc., Publishers.
- Darnton, R. (1991). An enlightened revolution? *New York Review of Books*, 38(17): 33–36.
- Darnton, R. (2000). An early information society: News and the media in Eighteenth-century Paris. *The American Historical Review* 105(1), 1–35.
- Darnton, R. (2010). *Poetry and the police: Communication networks in eighteenth-century Paris*. Cambridge, Mass: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Davenport, T. H., & Beck, J. C. (2001). *Attention economy: Understanding the new currency of business*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- David, P. (1985). Clio and the economics QWERTY. *American Economic Review*, 75, 332–337.
- Davis, R. (1999). *The web of politics: The Internet's impact on the American political system*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Davis, R. (2005). *Politics online: Blogs, chatrooms, and discussion groups in American Democracy*. New York: Routledge.
- Dean, J. (2001). Cybersalons and civil society: Rethinking the public sphere in transnational techniculture. *Public Culture*, 13(2), 243–265.
- Delli Carpini, M. X., & Scott K. (1989). *What Americans know about politics and why it matters*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Delli Carpini, M. X., Cook, F. L., & Jacobs, L. R. (2004). Public deliberation, discursive participation, and citizen engagement: A review of the empirical literature. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 7, 315–344.
- Dennis, E. E. (1997). How “liberal” are the media, anyway?: The continuing conflict of professionalism and partisanship. *Harvard Journal of Press/Politics*, 2(4): 115–119.

- D'entreves, M. P. (2000). Arendt's theory of judgment. In D. Villa (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Hannah Arendt* (pp. 245–260). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Deuze, M. (2001). Online journalism: Modeling the first generation of new media on World Wide Web. Retrieved May 19, 2005 from *First Monday*, 6(10): http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue6_10/index.html.
- Deuze, M. & Paulussen, S. (2002). Online journalists in the low countries: Basic, occupational and professional characteristics of online journalists in Flanders and the Netherlands. *European Journal of Communication*, 17(2), 237–245.
- Dewey, J. (1954). *The public and its problems*. Chicago: The Swallow Press. (Original work published 1927).
- Dewey, J. (1976). Creative democracy: The task before us. In J. Boydstone (Ed.), *John Dewey: The later works, 1925–1953, Vol. 14* (pp. 224–230). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. (Original work published 1939)
- DiMaggio, P. (1994). Culture and economy. In N. J. Smelser & R. Swedberg (Eds.), *The handbook of economic sociology* (pp. 27–57). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- DiMaggio, P., Hargittai, E., Neuman, W. R., & Robinson, J. P. (2001). Social Implications of the Internet. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27, 307–336.
- Dominick, J. R. (1999). Who do you think you are? Personal homepages and self-presentation on the World Wide Web. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 76(4), 646–58.
- Donald, D. H. (1995). *Lincoln*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Downs, A. (1957). *An economic theory of democracy*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
- Duff, A. S. (2008). Powers in the land?: British political columnists in the information era. *Journalism Practice*, 2(2), 230–244.
- Duncan, C. M. (1995). Civic virtue and self-interest: Comment. *American Political Science Review*, 89(1), 147–148.
- Eagleton, T. (1996). *The function of criticism: From The Spectator to Post Structuralism*. London: Verso. (Original work published 1984).
- Eason, D. L. (1986). On journalistic authority: The Janet Cook scandal. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 3:429–447.
- Eastin, M. S., Greenber, B. S., & Hofschire, L. (2006). Parenting the Internet. *Journal of Communication*, 56(3), 486–504.
- Eisenstein, E. L. (1980). *The printing press as a agent of change*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1979)

- Eliasoph, N. (1990). Political culture and the presentation of a political self: A study of the public sphere in the spirit of Erving Goffman. *Theory and Society* 19, 465–494.
- Eliasoph, N. (1996). Making a fragile public: A talk-centered study of citizenship and power. *Sociological Theory*, 14(3), 262–289.
- Eliasoph, N. (1998). *Avoiding Politics: How Americans Produce Apathy in Everyday Life*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Emerson, R. M., Shaw, L. L., & Fretz, R. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Entman, R. M. (1989). *Democracy without citizens: Media and the decay of American politics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Entman, R. M. (1991). Framing U.S. coverage of international news: Contrasts in narratives of the Kal and Iran Air incidents. *Journal of Communication*, 41(4), 6–27.
- Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51–58.
- Etzioni, A. (2006). Are public intellectuals an endangered species? In A. Etzioni, (Ed.), *Public intellectuals: An endangered species?*, pp. 1–27, New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC.
- Fairlie, H. (1984). The decline of oratory. *The New Public*, May 28, 15–19.
- Fearon, J. D. (1998). Deliberation as discussion. In J. Elster (Ed.), *Deliberative democracy* (pp. 44–68). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ferdinand, P. (2000). The Internet, democracy and democratization. In P. Ferdinand (Ed.), *The Internet, democracy and democratization* (pp. 1–17). London: Frank Kass.
- Figallo, C. (1995). The WELL: A regionally based on-line community on the Internet. In B. Kahin & J. Keller (Eds). *Public access to the Internet* (pp. 34–61). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Finn, S. & Gorr, M. B. (1988). Social isolation and social support as correlates of television viewing motivations. *Communication Research*, 15, 135–158.
- Fiorina, M. P. (1976). The voting decision: Instrumental and expressive aspects. *Journal of Politics*, 38, 390–415.
- Fishkin, J. (1991). *Democracy and deliberation: New directions for democratic reform*. New Have, MA: Yale University Press.
- Fiske, J. (1989). *Television culture*. New York: Routledge. (Original work published 1987)

- Fiske, J. & Hartley, J. (2003). *Reading television*. New York: Routledge. (Original work published in 1978)
- Fletcher, G. J. (1984). Psychology and common sense. *American Psychologist*, 39(3), 203-213.
- Forguson, L. (1989). *Common sense*. New York: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. (1995). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison* (A. Sheridan, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books. (Original work published in 1975)
- Foucault, M. (1984). What is Enlightenment? (C. Porter, Trans.). In P. Rabinow (Ed.), *The Foucault reader* (pp. 32–50). New York: Pantheon Books.
- Foucault, M. & Rabinow, P. (1984). Polemics, politics, and problemizations: An interview with Michel Foucault. In P. Rabinow (Ed.), *The Foucault reader* (pp. 381–390). New York: Pantheon Books.
- Franzosi, R. (1998). Narrative analysis—Or why (and how) sociologists should be interested in narrative. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24, 517–554.
- Fraser, N. (1992). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. In C. Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere* (pp. 109–142). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Fraser, N. (2000). Rethinking recognition. *New Left Review*, 3: 107–120.
- French, H. (2000). Internet recharges reformers in S. Korea. *New York Times* 2 (February):
- Froomkin, D. (2007). A voice, a brain, and a notebook: Bloggers have taken where I.F. Stone left off, and journalists shouldn't be far behind. *Nieman Reports*, 61(2): 74–76.
- Fung, A. (2002). One city, two systems: Democracy in an electronic chat room in Hong Kong. *Javnost-the Public* 9(2), 77–94.
- Fulton, R. B. (1975). The measurement of speaker credibility. *Journal of Communication*, 20, 270–279.
- Gallagher, D. F. (2002, September 23). Reporters find new outlet, and concerns, in web logs. *New York Times*, p. 9.
- Gambetta, D. (1998). “Claro!”: An essay on discursive machismo. In J. Elster (Ed.), *Deliberative democracy* (pp. 19–43). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gamson, W. A. (1992). *Talking politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gamson, J. (1999). *Taking the talk show challenge: Television, emotion, and public spheres*. *Constellations*, 6(2), 190–205.

- Gans, H. J. (2007). Everyday news, newswriters, and professional journalism. *Political Communication*, 24(2), 161–166.
- Gasset, J. O. Y. (1964) *The revolt of the masses*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc. (Original work published 1930).
- Gaziano, C. & McGrath, K. (1986). Measuring the concept of credibility. *Journalism Quarterly*, 63(3), 451–462.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of culture: Selected essays*. New York: Basic Books.
- Geertz, C. (1974). “From the native’s point of view”: On the nature of anthropological understanding. *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 28(1), 26–45.
- Geertz, C. (1975). Common sense as a cultural system. *Antioch Review*, 33 (1), 5–26.
- Geertz, C. (2000). *Local knowledge: Further essays in interpretive anthropology* (3rd ed.). New York: Basic Books. (Original work published in 1983)
- Geertz, C. (1988). *Works and lives: The anthropologist as author*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Giddens, A. (1990). *The consequences of modernity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Gieryn, T. F. (2000). A space for place in sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*. 26, 463–496.
- Gillmore, D. (2004). *We the media: Grassroots journalism by the people for the people*. Cambridge, MA: O’Reilly.
- Gimmler, A. (2001). Deliberative democracy, the public sphere and the Internet. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 27(4), 21–39.
- Giner-Sorolla, R. & Chaiken, S. (1994). The causes of hostile media judgment. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 30(2), 165–180.
- Ginzburg, C. (1980). *The cheese and the worms: The cosmos of a sixteenth-century miller*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. (Original work published 1976)
- Gitlin, T. (1979). *The whole world is watching*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Giussani, B. (1999). A new media tells different stories. Retrieved April 3, 2008, from *First Monday* 2.4: http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue2_4/giussani/
- Glasser, T. L. (Ed.), (1999). *The idea of public journalism*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor.

- Golding, P. (1990). Political communication and citizenship: The media and democracy in an egalitarian social order. In M. Gerguson (Ed.), *Public communication: The new imperatives: Future directions for media research* (pp. 84–113). London: SAGE Publications.
- Good, B. & Good, M-J. D. (2005). On the “subject” of culture: Subjectivity and cultural phenomenology in the work of Clifford Geertz. In R. A. Shweder & B. Good (Eds.), *Clifford Geertz by his colleagues* (pp. 98–107). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Gorlthorpe, J. H. (1991). The uses of history in sociology: Reflections on some recent tendencies. *British Journal of Sociology*, 42(2), 211–230.
- Gould, R. V. (1993). Collective action and network structure. *American Sociological Review*, 58, 182–196.
- Gould, R. V. (1995). *Insurgent identities: Class, community, and protest in Paris from 1848 to the Commune*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Gouldner, A. W. (1976). *The dialectic of ideology and technology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Graftstein, Rt. (1981). The failure of Weber’s conception of legitimacy: Its causes and implications. *The Journal of Politics*, 43(2), 456–472.
- Green, D. P., & Shapiro, I. (1994). *Pathologies of rational choice theory: A critique of applications in political science*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Grey, D. L., & Brown, T. R. (1970). Letters to the editor: Hazy reflections of public opinion. *Journalism Quarterly*, 47: 450–456.
- Griswold, W. (1994). *Cultures and societies in a changing world*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Grossman, L. K. (1995). *The electronic republic: Reshaping democracy in the information age*. New York: Viking.
- Guelzo, A. C. (2008). *Lincoln and Douglas: The debates that defined America*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Gunther, A. C. (1992). Biased press or biased public? Attitudes toward media coverage of social groups. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 56(2), 147–167.
- Gutmann, A. & Thompson, D. F. (1996). *Democracy and disagreement*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Gutmann, A. & Thompson, D. F. (2004). *Why deliberative democracy?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Habermas, J. (1989). *The structural change of the Bourgeois public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. (T. Burger, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (Original work published 1962)
- Habermas, J. (1974). *Theory and practice*. (J. Viertel, Trans.). London: Heinemann. (Original work published 1963)
- Habermas, J. (1971). *Toward a rational society*. (J. J. Shapiro, Trans.). London: Heineman. (Original work published 1967)
- Habermas, J. (1971). *Knowledge and human interest*. (J. J. Shapiro, Trans.). Toronto: Beacon Press. (Original work published 1968).
- Habermas, J. (1975). *Legitimation crisis*. (T. McCarthy, Trans.). Boston: Beacon Press. (Original work published 1973)
- Habermas, J. (1994). Hannah Arendt's communications concept of power. In L. P. Hinchman & S. K. Hinchman (Eds.), *Hannah Arendt: Critical essays* (pp. 211–229). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. (Original work published 1977)
- Habermas, J. (1992a). Further reflections on the public sphere. In C. Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere* (pp. 421–461). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Habermas, J. (1996). *Between facts and norms: Contribution to a discourse theory of law and democracy*. (W. Rehg, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. (Original work published 1992)
- Habermas, J. (1996). Reply to Symposium Participants, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of law. *Cardozo Law Review*, 17(4–5), 1477–1558.
- Habermas, J. (1998). Three normative models of democracy. In C. Cronin & P. D. Greiff (Eds.), *The inclusion of the other: Studies in political theory* (pp. 239–252). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. (Original work published 1996)
- Haggard, S. & Moon, C. (1993). The state, politics, and economic development in postwar South Korea. In H. Koo (Ed), *State and society in contemporary Korea* (pp. 51–93). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Hagemann, C. (2002). Participation in and contents of two Dutch political party discussion lists on the Internet. *Jabnost-the Public*, 9(2), 61–76.
- Hahm, C. (2008). South Korea's miraculous democracy. *Journal of Democracy*, 19(3): 128–142.
- Hall, J. R. & Neitz, M. J. (1993). *Culture: Sociological perspectives*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

- Hall, S. (1982). The rediscovery of 'ideology': Return of the repressed in media studies. In M. Gurevitch, T. Bennet, J. Curran, & J. Woollacott (Eds.), *Culture, society and media* (pp. 56–90). London: Routledge.
- Hallin, D. C. (1986). Cartography, community, and the cold war. In K. Manoff & M. Schudson (Eds.), *Reading the news* (pp. 109–145). New York: Pantheon Books.
- Hallin, D. C. (1994). *We keep America on top of the world: Television journalism and the public sphere*. New York: Routledge.
- Hallin, D. C., & Mancini, P. (2004). *Comparative media systems: Three models of media and politics*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Hannay, A. (2005). *On the public*. London: Routledge.
- Hansen, A. (2006). Tampering with nature: 'nature' and the 'natural' in media coverage of genetics and biotechnology. *Media, Culture & Society*, 28(6): 811–834.
- Haraway, D. (1991). *Simians, cyborgs, and women: The reinvention of nature*. New York: Routledge.
- Hardy, B. W., & Scheufele, D. A. (2005). Examining differential gains from Internet use: Comparing the moderating role of talk and online interactions. *Journal of Communication*, 55(1), 71–84.
- Harris, B. (1996). *Politics and the rise of the press: Britain and France, 1620–1800*. New York: Routledge.
- Hauben, M. & Hauben, R. (1997). *Netizens: On the history and impact of Usenet and the Internet*. Los Alamitos, CA: IEEE Computer Society Press.
- Hauben, R. (2007). Online grassroots journalism and participatory democracy in South Korea. In R. Frank, J. E. Hoane, P. Köllner, & S. Pares (Eds.), *Korea yearbook: Politics, economy and society* (Vol. 1) (pp. 61–82). Leiden, Netherlands: Brill.
- Heater, D. (1990). *Citizenship: The civic ideal in world history, politics and education*. New York: Longman.
- Held, D. (1996). *Models of democracy* (2nd ed.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Henderson, G. (1968). *Korea: The politics of the vortex*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Heo, J. (Interviewer), & Muico, N. K. (interviewee). (2008, July 19). [Exclusive interview] Amnesty investigator "the candlelit vigil great people power." *Hankyure Shinmun*. Retried October 10, 2008 from http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/society/society_general/299489.html.

- Herbst, S. (1994). *Politics at the margin: Historical studies of public expression outside the mainstream*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Herzog, D. (1998). *Poisoning the minds of the lower orders*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University.
- Hibbing, J. R. & Elizabeth T-M. (2002). *Stealth democracy: Americans' belief about how government should work*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hill, K. A., & Hugues, J. E. (1998). *Cyberpolitics: Citizen activism in the age of the Internet*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC.
- Hill, M. & Montag, W. (Ed.). (2000). *Masses, Classes, and the public sphere*. London: Verso.
- Hindman, M. (2009). *The myth of digital democracy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Hine, C. (2000). *Virtual ethnography*. London: SAGE.
- Hebec, V., Manfred, K. L., & Vehovar, V. (2006). The social support networks of Internet users. *New Media & Society*, 8(1), 9–32.
- Hofstetter, C. R., Donoan, M. C., Klauber, M. R., Cole, A., Huie, C. J., & Yuasa, T. (1994). Political talk show: A stereotype reconsidered. *Political Research Quarterly*, 7(2), 467–479.
- Hohendahl, P. U. (1982). *The institution of criticism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Holland, D. & Leander, K. (2004). Ethnographic studies of positioning and subjectivity: An introduction. *Ethos*, 32(2), 127–139.
- Honneth, A. 1998. Democracy as reflexive cooperation: John Dewey and the theory of democracy today. *Political Theory*, 26(6): 763–783.
- Hynds, E. C. (1991). Editorial page editors discuss use of letters. *Newspaper Research Journal*, 13(1), 124–136.
- Im, H. B. (2000). South Korean democratic consolidation from comparative perspective. In L. Diamond & B. K. Kim (Eds.), *Consolidating democracy in South Korea* (pp. 21–52). Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner.
- Im, H. B. (2004). Faltering democratic consolidation in South Korea: Democracy at the end of the 'Three Kims' era. *Democratization*, 11(5): 179–198.
- Isin, E. F. & Turner, B. S. (Eds.), (2002). *Handbook of citizenship studies*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Jacobitti, S. D. (1996). Thinking about the self. In L. May & J. Kohn (Eds.), *Hannah Arendt: Twenty years later* (pp. 199–219). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

- Jacobs, R. N. (2000). *Race, media and the crisis of civil society: From Watts to Rodney King*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jacoby, R. (1987). *The last intellectuals: American culture in the age of academe*. New York: Basic Books.
- Jankowski, N. & van Selm, M. (2000). The promise and practice of public debate in Cyberspace. In K. L. Hacker & J. van Dijk (Eds.), *Digital democracy: Issues of theory and practice* (pp. 149–165). London: SAGE Publications.
- Janowitz, M. (1952). *The community press in an urban setting*. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press.
- Jennings, M. K. & Zeitner, V. (2003). Internet use and civic engagement: A longitudinal analysis. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 67, 311–334.
- Johns, A. (2002). AHR forum: How to acknowledge a Revolution. *American Historical Review*, 107(1), 106–125.
- Johns, C., Dowd, T. J., & Ridgeway, C. L. (2006) Legitimacy as a social process. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 32, 53–78.
- Johnson, T. J. & Kaye, B. K. (1998). A vehicle for engagement or haven for the disaffected: Internet use, political alienation and voter participation. In T. J. Johnson, C. E. Hays, & S. P. Hays (Eds.), *Engaging the public: How government and the media can reinvigorate American democracy* (pp. 123–135). New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Jordan, J. W. (2007). Disciplining the virtual home front: Mainstream news and the web during the war in Iraq. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 4(3), 276–302.
- Kanazawa, S. (2000). A new solution to the collective action problem: The paradox of voter turnout. *American Sociological Review*, 65(3), 433–442.
- Kang, J. (2009). Coming to terms with “unreasonable” global power: The 2002 South Korean candlelight vigils. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 6(2), 171–192.
- Kant, I. (1991). An answer to the question: ‘What is Enlightenment?’ In H. S. Reiss (Ed.), *Kant: Political writings* (pp. 54–60). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1784).
- Katz, E. (1959). Mass communication research and the study of popular culture. *Studies in Public Communication*, 2, 1–6.
- Katz, E. (2005). Lazarsfeld’s legacy: The power of limited effects. In E. Katz & P. F. Lazarsfeld, *Personal influence: The part played by people in the flow of mass communications* (pp. xv–xxvii). Glencoe, IL: The Free Press.
- Katz, E. (2006). Rediscovering Gabriel Tarde. *Political Communication*, 23, 263–270.

- Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. (1974). Utilization of mass communication by the individual. In J. G. Blumler & E. Katz (Eds.), *The uses of mass communications: Current perspectives on gratifications research* (pp. 19–32). Beverly Hill, CA: SAGE Publications, INC.
- Katz, . & Lazarsfeld, P. F. (2005). *Personal influence: The part played by people in the flow of mass communications*. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press. (Original work published 1955).
- Keane, J. (1984). *Public life and late capitalism: Toward a socialist theory of democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kelley, H. H. (1992). Common-sense psychology and scientific psychology. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 43, 1-24.
- Kellogg, R. T. (1994). *The psychology of writing*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kendall, L. (1999). Recontextualizing “cyberspace”: Methodological considerations for on-line research. In S. Jones (Ed.), *Doing Internet research: Critical issues and methods for examining the Net* (pp. 57–74). London: SAGE
- Kenix, L. J. (2009). Blogs as alternative. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 14(4), 790–822.
- Kiesler, S., Siegel, J., & McGuire, T. W. (1984). Social psychological aspects of computer-mediated communication. *American Psychologist*, 39, 1123-1134.
- Kim, B-K. (2000). Party politics in South Korea’s democracy: The crisis of success. In L. Diamond & B. Kim (Eds.), *Consolidating democracy in South Korea* (pp. 53–86). Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner.
- Kim, E, & Hamilton, J. W. (2006). Capitulation to capital: Ohmynews as alternative media. *Media, Culture and Society*, 28, 541–560.
- Kim, J. (2009). Public feeling for science: The Hwang affair and Hwang supporters. *Public Understanding of Science*, 18(6), 670–686.
- Kim, J, Wyatt, R. O., & Katz, E. (1999). News, talk, opinion, participation: The part played by conversation in deliberative democracy. *Political Communication*, 16, 361–385.
- Kim, S. (2000). *The political democratization in Korea: The role of civil society*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Kim, S. (2003). Civil society in democratizing Korea. In S. S. Kim (Ed.), *Korea’s democratization* (pp. 81–106). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kim, S. (2005). Civil society and democratization in South Korea. In C. K. Armstrong (Ed.), *Korean society: Civil society, democracy, and the state* (pp. 53–72). New York: Routledge.

- King, G., Keohane, R. O., & Verba, S. (1994). *Designing social inquiry: Scientific inference in qualitative research*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Klein, H. & Kleinman, D. (2002). The social construction of technology: Structural considerations. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 27, 28–52.
- Kleinman, A. & Fitz-Henry, E. (2007). The experiential basis of subjectivity: How individuals change in the context of societal transformation. In J. Biehl, B. Good, & A. Kleinman (Eds.), *Subjectivity: Ethnographic investigations* (pp. 52–65). Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Kluver, R. (2004). Political culture and Information technology in the 2001 Singapore general election. *Political Communication*, 21(4), 435–458.
- Knack, S. (1992). Civic norms, social sanctions, and voter turnout. *Rationality and society*, 4, 133–156.
- Knorr Cetina, K. (1997). Sociality with objects: Social relations in postsocial knowledge societies. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 14(4), 1–30.
- Koo, H. (1993a). The state, Minjung, and the working class in South Korea. In H. Koo (Ed.), *Sate and society in Contemporary Korea* (pp. 131–162). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Koo, H. (1993b). Strong state and contentious society. In H. Koo (Ed.), *Sate and society in Contemporary Korea* (pp. 231–249). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Koo, H. (Ed.), (1993c). *Sate and society in Contemporary Korea*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Koo, H. (2001). *Korean workers: The culture and politics of class formation*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Koo, H. (2005). Engendering civil society: The role of the labor movement. In C. K. Armstrong (Ed.), *Korean society: Civil society, democracy, and the state* (pp. 73–94). New York: Routledge.
- Kopper, G. G., Albrecht, K., & Czepek, A. (2000). Research review: Online journalism—a report on current and continuing research and major questions in the international discussion. *Journalism Studies*, 1(3), 499–512.
- Kovach, B. & Rosenstiel, T. (2007). *The elements of journalism: What newspeople should know and the public should expect*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
- Kuper, A. (1999). *Culture: The anthropologists' account*. Cambridge, MA: Havard University Press.

- Kymlicka, W. & Norman, W. (1995). Return of the citizen: A survey of recent work on citizenship theory. In R. Beiner (Ed.), *Theorizing citizenship* (pp. 283–322). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Lanham, R. A. (2006). *The economics of attention: Style and substance in the age of information*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Larmore, C. (2001). Moral judgment. In R. Beiner & J. Nedelsky (Eds.), *Judgment, imagination, and politics: Themes from Kant and Arendt* (pp. 47–64). New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. (Original work published 1981).
- Lasch, C. (1983). Introduction. *Salmagundi*, 60, iv–xvi.
- Lasch, C. (1990). Journalism, publicity and the lost art of argument. *Gannett Center Journal*, 4: 1–11.
- Lasica, J. D. (2003, Aug. 7). What is participatory journalism? *Online Journalism Review*. Retrieved April 12, 2008 from <http://www.ojr.org/workplace/1060217106.php>.
- Latour, B. (1992). Where are the missing masses? Sociology of a few mundane artefacts. In W. Bijker, & J. Law (Eds.), *Shaping technology, building society: Studies in sociotechnical change* (pp. 225–258). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Latour, B. (1993). *We have never been modern*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Latour, B. (1999). *Pandora's hope: Essays on the reality of science studies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Laursen, J. C. (1986). The subversive Kant: The vocabulary of “public” and “publicity.” *Political Theory*, 14(4), 584–603
- Lave, J., Duguid, P., Fernandez, N., & Axel, E. (1992). Coming of age in Birmingham: Cultural studies and conceptions of subjectivity. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 21, 257–282.
- Lazarsfeld, P. F., Berelson, B., & Gaudet, H. (1968). *The people's choice: How the voter makes up his mind in a presidential campaign* (3rd ed.). New York: Columbia University Press. (Original work published 1944).
- Lee, E-J, (2004). E-democracy@work: The 2002 presidential election in Korea. In S. Gan, J. Gomez, & U. Johannsen (Eds.), *Asian cyberativism: Freedom of expression and media censorship* (pp. 622–644). Bangkok: Friedrich Naumann Foundation, East and Southeast Asia Regional Office.
- Lee, K. M. (2004). Presence, explicated. *Communication Theory*, 14(1), 27-50.
- Lee, N. (2005). The South Korean student movement: Undongkwon as a counterpublic sphere. In C. K. Armstrong (Ed.), *Korean society: Civil society, democracy, and the state* (pp. 95–120). New York: Routledge.

- Lee, N. (2007). *The making of minjung: Democracy and the politics of representation in South Korea*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Leighley, J. E. (1995). Attitudes, opportunities and incentives: A field essay on political participation. *Political Research Quarterly*, 48(1), 181–209.
- Lessl, T. M. (1989). The priestly voice. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 75:183–197.
- Lie, J. (1998). *Han unbound: The political economy of South Korea*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Linz, J. J., & Stephen, A. (1996). *Problems of democratic transition and consolidation: Southern Europe, South American, and Post-communist Europe*. Baltimore, MA: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Lippmann, W. (1950). *Public opinion*. New York: Macmillan Company. (Original work published 1922).
- Lippmann, W. (2002). *The phantom public*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers. (Original work published 1925).
- Lipset, S. M. (1960). *Political man: The social bases of politics*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc.
- Livingstone, S. & P. Lunt. (1994). *Talk on television: Audience participation and public debate*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Luke, T. W. (2006). Power and political culture. In L. A. Lievrouw and S. Livingstone (Eds.), *The handbook of new media: Social shaping and social consequences of ICTs* (Updated student ed.) (pp. 163–183). London: SAGE Publication Ltd.
- Lull, J. (1980). The social use of television. *Human Communication Research*, 6, 197–209.
- Lunt, P. & Stenner, P. (2005). The Jerry Springer Show as an emotional public sphere. *Media, Culture & Society*, 27(1): 59–81.
- Lustick, I. S. (1996). History, historiography, and political science: Multiple historical records and the problem of selection bias. *American Political Science Review*, 90(3), 605–618.
- McAdam, D. (1982). *Political process and the development of black insurgency, 1930–1970* (2nd ed.). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- McChesney, R. W. (1997). The communication revolution: the market and the prospect for democracy. In M. Bailie & D. Winseck (Eds.), *Democratizing communications?: Comparative perspectives on information and power* (pp. 57–78). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

- McChesney, R. W. (1999). *Rich media, poor democracy: Communication politics in dubious times*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- McClure, K. (1997). The odor of judgment: Exemplarity, propriety, and politics in the company of Hannah Arendt. In C. Calhoun & J. McGowan (Eds.), *Hannah Arendt and the meaning of politics* (pp. 53-84). Minneapolis, M: University of Minnesota Press.
- McCoy, M. E. (2001). Dark alliance: News repair and institutional authority in the age of the Internet. *Journal of Communication*, 51(1), 164-193.
- McGrath, C. (1996, Dec. 8). The Internet's arrested development. *New York Times Magazine*, 84
- McGuire, P., Granovetter, M., & Schavartz, M. (1993). Thomas Edison and the social construction of the early electricity industry in America. In R. Swedberg et al. (Eds.), *Explorations in economic sociology* (pp. 213-246). New York: Russel Sage Foundation.
- McNair, B. (2008). I, columnist. In B. Franklin (Ed.), *Pulling newspapers apart: Analysing print journalism* (pp. 112-120). New York: Routledge.
- McQuail, D., Blumler, J. G., & Brown, J. (1972). The television audience: A revised perspective. In D. McQuail (Ed.), *Sociology of Mass Communication* (pp. 135-165). Middlesex, UK: Penguin.
- Macpherson, C. B. (1977). *The life and times of liberal democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Maines, D. R. (1993). Narrative's moment and sociology's phenomena: Toward a narrative sociology. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 34(1), 17-38.
- Mann, M. (1987). Ruling class strategies and citizenship. *Sociology*, 21, 339-354.
- Mansbridge, J. J. (1980). *Beyond adversary democracy*. New York: Basic Books.
- Mansbridge, J. J. (1999). Everyday talk in the deliberative system. In S. Macedo (Ed.), *Deliberative democracy: Essays on Democracy and Disagreement* (pp. 211-239). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Mansfield, N. (2000). *Subjectivity: Theories of the self from Freud to Haraway*. New York: New York University Press.
- Maratea, R. (2008). The e-rise and fall of social problems: The blogosphere as a public arena. *Social Problem*, 55, 139-160.
- Margolis, M. & Resnick, D. (2000). *Politics as usual: The cyberspace "revolution."* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Marmura, S. (2008). A net advantage? The Internet, grassroots activism and American middle-Eastern policy. *New Media & Society*, 10(2), 247-271.

- Marshall, T. H. (1992). Citizenship and social class. In T. H. Marshall & T. Bottomore (Eds.), *Citizenship and social class* (pp. 1–51). London: Pluto Press. (Original work published 1949).
- Massey, D. (1994). *Space, place, and gender*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- May, P. & Gastil, J. (2006). Predicting deliberative conversation: The impact of discussion networks, media use, and political cognitions. *Political Communication*, 23(4), 443–460.
- Melton, J. V. H. (2001). *The rise of the public in Enlightenment Europe*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Merton, R. K. (1968). *Social theory and social structure*. New York: Free Press.
- Meyer, P. (1988). Defining and measuring credibility of newspapers: Developing an index. *Journalism Quarterly*, 65(3), 567–574, 588.
- Mills, C. W. (1956). *The power elite*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Min, S-J. (2007). Online vs. face-to-face deliberation: Effects on civic engagement. Retrieved January 25, 2009 from *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12(4): <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol12/issue4/min.html>.
- Moog, S. & Sluyter-Beltrao, J. (2001). The transformation of political communication. In B. Axford & R. Huggins (Eds.), *New media and politics* (pp. 30–63). London: SAGE Publications.
- Mouffe, C. (Ed.). (1992). *Dimensions of radical democracy: Pluralism, citizenship, and community*. London: Verso.
- Muhlberger, P. (2005). Human agency and the revitalization of the public sphere. *Political Communication*, 22(2), 163–178.
- Munck, T. (2000). *The enlightenment: A comparative social history 1721–1794*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Mutz, D. (2006). *Hearing the other side: Deliberative versus participatory democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Negroponte, N. (1995). *Being digital*. New York: Knopf.
- Nerone, J. (1990). Violence against the press in U.S. history. *Journal of Communication*, 40(3): 6–33.
- Nerone, J. (1992). The history of the public sphere. *Journal of Communication*, 42(2): 163–171.
- Nerone, J. (1994). *Violence against the press: Policing the public sphere in U.S. history*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Nerone, J. (Ed.). (1995). *Last rights: Revisiting four theories of the press*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Nerone, J. (2006a). The public and the party period. In J. Packer & C. Robertson (Eds.), *Thinking with James Carey* (pp. 157–176). New York: Peter Lang.
- Nerone, J. (2006b). The Future of communication history. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 23(3), 254–262.
- Nerone, J. (2008). Newswork, technology, and cultural form, 1837–1920. In B. Zelizer (Ed.), *Explorations in communication and history* (pp. 136–156). New York: Routledge.
- Neuman, W. R. (2000). The impact of the new media: Fragmentation, stratification and political evolution. In W. L. Bennet and R. M. Entman (Eds.), *Mediated politics: Communication in the future of democracy* (pp.299–320). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press
- Nevins, A. (Ed.). (1938). *The letters of Lincoln Steffens*, Vol. 1. New York: Harcourt Brace.
- Nimmo, D. & Combs, J. E. (1992). *The political pundits*. New York: Praeger Publisher.
- Nitecki, J. Z. (1987). In search of sense in common sense management. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 6(8), 639–647.
- Norris, A. (1996). Arendt, Kant, and the politics of common sense. *Polity*, 29(2), 165–191.
- Oakeshott, M. (1991). Political discourse. In *Rationalism in politics and other essays* (New and expanded ed.) (pp. 70–95). Indianapolis: Liberty Press.
- Oakshott, M. (1991a). The activity of being an historian. In *Rationalism in politics and other essays* (New and expanded ed.) (pp.151–183). Indianapolis: Liberty Press. (Original work published 1961).
- Oakshott, M. (1991b). The masses in representative democracy. In *Rationalism in politics and other essays* (New and expanded ed.) (pp.363–383). Indianapolis: Liberty Press. (Original work published 1961).
- Olson, M. (1965). *The logic of collective action*. Cambridge, MA: Havard University Press.
- O'Neill, O. (1986). The public use of reason. *Political Theory*, 14(4), 523–551.
- Orbuch, T. L. (1997). People's accounts count: The sociology of accounts. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 23, 455–478.
- Ortner, S. (1994). Theory in Anthropology since the sixties. In N. B. Dirks, G. Eley, & S. B. Ortner (Eds.), *Culture/power/history: A reader in contemporary social theory* (pp. 372–411). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Original work published 1984).
- Ortner, S. (2005). Subjectivity and cultural critique. *Anthropological Theory*, 5(1), 31–52.

- O'Sullivan, S. (2005). 'The whole nation is listening to you': The presentation of the self on a tabloid talk radio show. *Media, Culture & Society*, 27(5), 719–738.
- Paquet, S. (Oct. 9, 2002). Making group-forming ridiculously easy. Retrieved January 20, 2009 from Seb's Open Research: <http://radio-weblogs.com/0110772/2002/10/09.html>
- Page, R. N. (2001). Common sense: A form of teacher knowledge. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 33(5), 525–533.
- Paine, T. (2003). Common sense. In S. Hook (Ed.), *Common sense, rights of man, and other essential writings of Thomas Paine* (pp. 3–70). New York: Signetic Classic.
- Palmgreen, P. & Rayburn II, J. D. (1985). An expectancy-value approach to media gratifications. In K. E. Rosengren, L. A. Wenner, & P. Palmgreen (Eds.), *Media gratification research: Current perspectives* (pp. 61–72). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Palmgreen P., Wenner, L. A., & Rosengren, K. E. (1985). Uses and gratifications research: The past ten years. In K. E. Rosengren, L. A. Wenner, & P. Palmgreen (Eds.), *Media gratification research: Current perspectives* (pp. 11–37). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Papacharissi, Z. (2002a). The presentation of self in virtual life: Characteristics of personal home pages. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 79(3), 643–660.
- Papacharissi, Z. (2002b). The self online: The utility of personal home pages. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 46(3), 346–368.
- Papacharissi, Z. (2004). Democracy online: Civility, politeness, and the democratic potential of online political discussion groups. *New Media & Society*, 6(2), 259–283.
- Park, D. W. (2009). Blogging with authority: Strategic positioning in political blogs. *International Journal of Communication*, 3, 250–273.
- Park, M-J., Kim, C-N., & Sohn, B-W. (2000). Modernization, globalization, and the powerful state: The Korean media. In J. Curran & M. Park (Eds.), *De-Westernizing Media Studies* (pp. 111–123). London: Routledge.
- Park, R. E. (1972). The crowd and the public. In H. Elser, JR. (Ed.), *The crowd and the public and other essays* (pp. 1–81). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1904).
- Park, R. E. (1940). News as a form of knowledge: A chapter in the sociology of knowledge. *American Journal of Sociology*, 45(4), 669–686.
- Parsons, T. (1937). *The structure of social action: A study in social theory with special reference to a group of recent European writers*. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press.
- Pavlik, J. (2001). *Journalism and new media*. New York: Columbia University Press.

- Perloff, R. M. (1989). Ego-involvement and the third person effect of televised news coverage. *Communication Research*, 16, 236–262.
- Perrin, A. J. (2005). Political Microcultures: Linking civic life and democratic discourse. *Social Forces*, 84, 1049–1082.
- Perse, E. M. (1998). Implications of cognitive and affective involvement for channel changing. *Journal of Communication*, 48(3): 49–68.
- Perse, E. M. & Rubin, A. M. (1990). Chronic loneliness and television use. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 34, 37–53.
- Pew Research Center. (2005). *Trends 2005*. Washington DC: Author.
- Pickering, A. (1993) The mangle of practice: Agency and emergency in the sociology of science. *American Journal of Sociology*, 99(3): 559–589.
- Pickering, A. (1995). *The mangle of practice: Time, agency and science*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Pickering, A. (2005a). Decentering sociology: Synthetic dyes and social theory. *Perspectives on Science*, 13(3), 352–405.
- Pickering, A. (2005b). From dyes to Iraq: A reply to Jonathan Harwood. *Perspectives on Science*, 13(3), 416–425.
- Pinch, T. & Bijker, W. (1987). The social construction of facts and artifacts. In W. Bijker, T. P. Hughes, and T. Pinch (Eds.), *The social construction of technological systems: New directions in the sociology and history of technology* (pp. 17–50). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Pitkin, H. (1981). Justice: On reading public and private. *Political Theory*, 9(3), 327–352.
- Plato. (2000). *The republic*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Platon, S. & M. Deuze. (2003). Indymedia journalism: A radical way of making, selecting and sharing news. *Journalism*, 4(3), 336–355.
- Polletta, F. & Lee, J. (2006). Is telling stories good for democracy?: Rhetoric in public deliberation after 9/11. *American Sociological Review*, 71, 699–723.
- Poor, N. (2005). Mechanisms of an online public sphere: The website Slashdot. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 10(2): Retrieved July 3, 2008 from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/120837943/HTMLSTART>
- Poster, M. (1997). Cyberdemocracy: The Internet and the Public Sphere. In D. Holmes (Ed.), *Virtual Politics: Identity & Community in Cyberspace* (pp. 212–228). London: Sage.
- Price, V. (1992). *Communication concepts 4: Public opinion*. Newbury Park: SAGE Publications.

- Price, V. & Cappella, J. N. (2002). Online deliberation and its influence – the electronic dialogue project in campaign 2000. *IT & Society*, 1(1), 303–329.
- Price, V., Nir, L., & Cappella, J. N. (2006). Normative and informational influences in online political discussions. *Communication Theory*, 16, 47–74.
- Probyn, E. (1990). Technologizing the self: A future anterior for cultural studies. In L. Grossberg, C. Nelson, & P. A. Treichler (Eds.), *Cultural studies* (pp. 501–526). London: Routledge.
- Purcell, Jr., E. A. (1973). *The crisis of democratic theory: Scientific naturalism & the problem of value*. Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Putman, R. D. (1995). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy*, 6(1), 65–78.
- Putman, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Touchstone.
- Reese, S. D. (1990). The news paradigm and the ideology of objectivity: A socialist at the Wall Street Journal. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 7(4), 390-409.
- Reicher, Spears, & Postmes, (1995). Chapter 6: A social identity model of deindividuation phenomena. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 6, 161-198.
- Rescher, N. (2005). *Common-sense: A new look at an old philosophical tradition*. Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press.
- Rheingold, H. (1993). *The virtual community: Homesteading on the electronic frontier*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Rheingold, H. (2004). Electronic counterpower and collective action. In A. Curtis (Ed.), *Patriotism, democracy, and common sense: Restoring America's promise at home and abroad* (pp. 385–392). New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC.
- Richardson, J. E., & Franklin, B. (2004). Letters of Intent: Election campaigning and orchestrated public debate in local newspapers' letters to the Editor. *Political Communication*, 21(4), 459–478.
- Ricoeur, P. (1971). The model of the text: Meaningful action considered as a text. *Social Research*, 38(3), 529–562.
- Riker, W. H. & Ordeshook, P. C. (1968). A theory of the calculus of voting. *American Political Science Review*, 62, 25–42.
- Robbins, B. (Ed.). (1993). *The phantom public sphere*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

- Robinson, S. (2006). The mission of the j-blog: Recapturing journalistic authority online. *Journalism*, 7(1), 65–83.
- Rollins, P. C. (1988). Will Rogers and the relevance of nostalgia: Steamboat round the bend. In J. E. O'Connor & M. A. Jackson (Eds.), *American history/ American film* (pp. 77-96). New York: Ungar Publishing.
- Romano, C. (1986). The grisly truth about bare facts. In K. Manoff & M. Schudson (Eds.), *Reading the news* (pp. 38–78). New York: Pantheon Books.
- Rorty, A. O. (2007). The vanishing subject: The many faces of subjectivity. In J. Biehl, B. Good, & A. Kleinman (Eds.), *Subjectivity: Ethnographic investigations* (pp. 34–51). Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Rosen, J. (1999). *What are journalists for?* New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Rosen, J. (2006, June 27). The people formerly known as the audiences. Retrieved March 3, 2008 from Pressthink:
http://journalism.nyu.edu/publzone/weblogs/pressthink/2006/06/07/ppl_frmr.html.
- Rosenfeld, S. (2008). Before democracy: The production and uses of common sense. *The Journal of Modern History*, 80, 1–54.
- Rosengren, K. E. (1974). Uses and gratifications: A paradigm outlined. In J. G. Blumler & E. Katz (Eds.), *The uses of mass communications: Current perspectives on gratifications research* (pp. 269–286). Beverly Hill, CA: SAGE Publications, INC.
- Rosengren, K. E. & Windahl, S. (1972). Mass media consumption as a functional alternative. In D. McQuail (Ed.), *Sociology of Mass Communication* (pp. 166–194). Middlesex, UK: Penguin.
- Rosenstone, S. J. & Hansen, J. M. (2003/1993). *Mobilization, participation, and democracy in America*. New York: Longman.
- Ross, D. K. (2004). Political talk radio and democratic participation: Caller perspectives on Election Call. *Media, Culture & Society*, 26(6), 785–801.
- Rubin, A. M. (2002). The uses-and-gratifications perspective of media effects. In J. Bryant & D. Zillman (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (2nd ed.) (pp. 525–548). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Rubin, A. M. & Rubin, R. B. (1982). Contextual age and television use. *Human Communication Research*, 8, 228–244.
- Rubin, H. J. & Rubin, I. S. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

- Sachs, H. (1995). Computer networks and the formation of public opinion: An ethnographic study. *Media, Cultural & Society*, 17(1), 81–99.
- Sahlins, M. (1981). *Historical metaphors and mythical realities: Structure in the early history of the Sandwich islands kingdom*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.
- Sahlins, M. (1985). *Islands of history*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Sartori, G. (1987). *The theory of democracy revisited*. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House.
- Sassi, S. (2001). The transformation of public sphere. In B. Axford & R. Huggins (Eds.), *New media and politics* (pp. 64–88). London: SAGE Publications.
- Scammell, M. (2000). The Internet and civic engagement: The age of the citizen-consumer. *Political Communication*, 17, 351–355.
- Schivelbusch, W. (1986). *The railway journey: The industrialization of time and space in the 19th century*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Schlozman, K. L., Verba, S., & Brady, H. E. (1995). Participation's not a paradox: The view from America activists. *British Journal of Political Science*, 25, 1–36.
- Schneider, S. M. (1996). Creating a democratic public sphere through political discussion: A case study of abortion conversation on the Internet. *Social Science Computer Review*, 14, 373–393.
- Schudson, M. (1995). *The power of news*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Schudson, M. (1997). Why conversation is not the soul of democracy. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 14, 297–309.
- Schudson, M. (1998). *The good citizen: A history of American civic life*. New York: The Free Press.
- Schudson, M. (1999). What public journalism knows and doesn't know. In T. L. Glasser (Ed.), *The idea of public journalism* (pp. 118–133). New York: The Guildford Press.
- Schudson, M. (2004). Embarrassment and Eving Goffman's idea of human nature. *Theory and Society*, 13, 633–648.
- Schumpeter, J. (1950/1942). *Capitalism, socialism, and democracy* (3rd ed.). New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers. (Original work published 1942).
- Scott, B. (2005). A contemporary history of digital journalism. *Television & New Media*, 6(1), 89–126.
- Seigel, J. (1999). Problematizing the self. In V. E. Bonnell & L. Hunt (Eds.), *Beyond the cultural turn* (pp. 281–314). Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

- Sen, A. K. (1990). Rational fools: A critique of the behavioral foundations of economic theory. In J. J. Mansbridge (Ed.), *Beyond self-interest* (pp. 25–43). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1978).
- Sennett, R. (1974). *The fall of public man*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Sennett, R. (1998). *The corrosion of character: The personal consequences of work in the new capitalism*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Seong, K-R. (2000). Civil society and democratic consolidation in South Korea: Great achievements and remaining problems. In L. Diamond and B. Kim (Ees.), *Consolidating democracy in South Korea* (pp.87–109). Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
- Sewell, W. H. (1999). The concept(s) of culture. In V. E. Bonnell & L. Hunt (Eds.), *Beyond the cultural turn* (pp. 35–61). Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
- Seymour-Ure, C. (1974). *The political impact of mass media*. London: Constable.
- Shah, D. V., Kwak, N., & Holbert, R. L. (2001). ‘Connection’ and ‘disconnection’ with civil life: Patterns of Internet use and the production of social capital. *Political Communication*, 18, 141–162.
- Shirky, C. (2008). *Here comes everybody: The power of organizing without organizations*. New York: The Penguin Press.
- Siapera, E. (2004). Asylum politics, the Internet, and the public sphere: The case of UK refugee support groups online. *Javnost-the Public*, 11(1), 79–100.
- Sigelman, K. & Walkosz, B. J. (1992). Letters to the editor as a public opinion thermometer: The Martin Luther King holiday vote in Arizona. *Social Science Quarterly*, 73(4), 938–946.
- Silberstone, R. (1999). *Why study the media?* London; SAGE Publications.
- Silverster, C. (1997). Introduction. In C. Silverster (Ed.), *The Penguin book of columnists* (pp. xi–xxvii). London: Viking.
- Singer, J. B. (1998). Online journalists: Foundation for research into their changing roles. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 4(1), Retrieved April 2, 2008 from <http://jcmc.huji.ac.il/vol4/issue1/singer.html>.
- Singer, J. B. (2003). Who are these guys? The online challenge to the notion of journalistic professionalism. *Journalism: Theory, practice and criticism*, 4(2), 139–163.
- Singer, J. B. (2005). The political J-bloggers: ‘Normalizing’ a new media form to fit old norms and practices. *Journalism*, 6(2): 173–198.
- Slack, J. D., & Wise, J. M. (2006). Cultural studies and communication technology. In L. A. Lievrouw & S. Livingstone (Eds.), *The handbook of new media: Social shaping and*

- social consequences of ICTs* (Updated student ed.) (pp. 141–162). London: SAGE Publication Ltd.
- Slater, M. D. (2003). Alienation, aggression, and sensation seeking as predictors of adolescent use of violent film, computer and website contents. *Journal of Communication*, 53(1), 105–121.
- Smolkin, R. (2004). The expanding blogosphere. *American Journalism Review*, 26 (June–July), 38–43.
- Somers, M. R. (2005). Citizenship troubles: Genealogies of struggle for the soul of the social. In J. Adams, E. S. Clemens, & A. S. Orloff (Eds.), *Remaking modernity: Politics, history, and sociology*, (pp. 438–469). Durham: Duke University Press.
- Sommerville, C. J. (1996). *The news revolution in England: Cultural dynamics of daily information*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Song, Y. (2007). Internet news media and issue development: A case study on the roles of independent online news services as agenda-builders for anti-US protests in South Korea. *New Media & Society*, 9(1), 71–92.
- Spears, R., Lea, M., & Lee, S. (1990). De-individuation and group polarization in computer-mediated communication. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 29, 121–134.
- Sproull, L. & Faraj, S. (1995). Atheism, sex, and databases: The net as a social technology. In B. Kahin & J. Keller (Eds.), *Public access to the Internet* (pp. 62–81). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Squires, C. (2001). The black press and the state: Attracting unwanted (?) attention. In R. Asen and D. C. Brouwer, *Counterpublics and the state*, pp. 111–136, Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Srinivasan, R. & Fish, A. (2009). Internet authorship in Kyrgyzstan: Social and political implications. *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, 14(3), 559–580.
- Stein, L. (2009). Social movement web use in theory and practice: A content analysis of US movement websites. *New Media & Society*, 11(5), 749–771.
- Steinberger, P. J. (1988). *The concept of political judgment*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Sterne, J. (1999). Thinking the Internet: Cultural studies versus the Millennium. In S. Jones (Ed.), *Doing Internet research: Critical issues and methods for examining the Net* (pp. 257–287). London: SAGE.
- Street, J. (2001). The transformation of political modernity. In B. Axford & R. Huggins (Eds.), *New media and politics* (pp. 210–224). London: SAGE Publications.

- Stryker, S. & Statham, A. (1985). Symbolic interaction and role theory. In C. Lindzey & E. Aronson (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (3rd ed.) (pp. 311–378). New York: Random.
- Stromer-Galley, J. (2000). Online interaction and why candidates avoid it. *Journal of Communication*, 50, 111–132.
- Stromer-Galley, J. (2002). New voice in the public sphere: A comparative analysis of interpersonal and online political talk. *Javnost-the Public*, 9(2), 23–42.
- Stromer-Galley, J. (2003). Diversity of political conversation on the Internet: Users' perspective. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 8(3). Retrieved May 2, 2007 from <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol8/issue3/stromergalley.html>.
- Suchman, M. C. (1995). Managing legitimacy: Strategic and instrumental approaches. *Academy of Management Review*, 20(3), 571–610.
- Sun, S., Rubin, A. M., & Haridakis, P. M. (2008). The role of motivation and media involvement in explaining Internet dependency. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 52(3), 408–430.
- Sunstein, C. (2007). *Republic.com 2.0*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Swanson, D. L. (2000). Political communication research and the mutations of democracy. *Communication Yearbook* 24, 189–205.
- Swanson, D. L. & Babrow, A. S. (1989). Uses and gratifications: The influence of gratificationseeking and expectancy-value judgment on the viewing of television news. In B. Dervin, L. Grossberg, B. J. O'Keefe, & E. Wartella (Eds.), *Rethinking communication Vol. 2* (pp. 361–375). Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Swidler, A. (1986). Culture in action: Symbols and strategies. *American Sociological Review*, 51, 273–286.
- Tanner, E. (2001). Chilean conversation: Internet forum participants debate Augusto Pinochet's detention. *Journal of Communication*, 51(2), 383–403.
- Tarrow, S. (1998). *Power in movement: Social movements and contentious politics* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor, C. (1997). The politics of recognition. In A. Gutmann (Ed.), *Multiculturalism* (pp. 25–85). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Taylor, C. (2004). *Modern social imaginaries*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Taylor, S. J. & Bogdan, R. (1998). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A guidebook and resource* (3rd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

- Tebbutt, J. (2006). Imaginative demographics: The emergence of a radio talkback audience in Australia. *Media, Culture & Society*, 28(6), 857–882.
- Thomas, W. I. & Thomas, D. S. (1970). *The child in America: Behavior problems and programs*. New York: Alfred A Knopf. (Original work published 1928).
- Thompson, E. P. (1967). Time, work-discipline and industrial capitalism. *Past and Present*, 38, 56–97.
- Thompson, J. B. (1995). *The media and modernity: A social theory of media*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Thucydides. (1996). History of the Peloponnesian War (R. Crawley, Trans.). In R. B. Strassler (Ed.), *The landmark Thucydides: A comprehensive guide to The Peloponnesian War* (pp. 1–548). New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Time. (2004, Dec. 27). People who mattered 2004: Dr. Hwang Woo Suk. 164(25). Retrieved Feb. 2, 2008, from *Time*:
http://www.time.com/time/asia/2004/personoftheyear/people/hwang_woo_suk.html.
- Tilly, C. (1983). Speaking your mind without elections, surveys, or social movements. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 47 (4), 461–478.
- Tocqueville, A. d. (1961). *A democracy in America* (Vol. 1). (H. Reeve, Trans.). New York: Schocken Books. (Original work published 1835)
- Tremayne, M., Zheng, N., Lee, J. K., & Jeong, J. (2006). Issue publics on the web: Applying network theory to the war blogosphere. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12, 290–310.
- Tsaliki, L. (2002). Online forums and the enlargement of public space: Research findings from a European project. *Javnost-the Public*, 9(2), 95–112.
- Turner, B. (1992/1990). Outline of a theory of citizenship. In C. Mouffe (Ed.), *Dimensions of radical democracy: Pluralism, citizenship, and community*. (pp. 33–62). London: Verso. (Original work published 1990).
- Turner, F. (2006). *From counterculture to cyberculture: Stewart Brand, the Whole Earth Network, and the rise of Digital Utopianism*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Tyler, T. R. (2006). Psychological perspectives of legitimacy and legitimization. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 57: 375–400.
- Uhlener, C. J. (1989). Rational turnout: The neglected role of group. *American Journal of Political Science*, 33. 390–422.
- Uslaner, E. M. (2004). Trust, civic engagement, and the Internet. *Political Communication*, 21(2), 223–242.

- Van Dijk, J. (1999). *The network society: Society aspects of new media*. London: Sage.
- Vallone, P. E., Ross, L., & Lepper, M. R. (1985). The hostile media phenomenon: Biased perception and perceptions of media bias in coverage of the Beirut massacre. *Journal of Personality and social psychology*, 49, 577–585.
- Verba, S., & Nie, N. H. (1972). *Participation in America: Political democracy and social equality*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Verba, S., Schlozman, K. L., & Brady, H. E. (1995). *Voice and equality: Civic voluntarism in American politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- von Kempen, H. (2007). Media-party parallelism and its effects: A cross-national comparative study. *Political Communication*, 24(3), 303–320.
- Vonnegut, K. (2006). *Mother night*. New York: The Dial Press. (Original work published 1961)
- Wahl-Jorgensen, K. (2001). Letters to the Editor as a forum for public deliberation: Modes of publicity and democratic debate. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 18(3), 303–320.
- Wahl-Jorgensen, K. (2002a). The normative-economic justification for public discourse: Letters to the Editor as a “Wide Open” Forum. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 79(1), 121–33.
- Wahl-Jorgensen, K. (2002b). The construction of the public in letters to the editor: Deliberative democracy and the idiom of insanity. *Journalism*, 3(2), 183–204.
- Wajcman, J. (2000). Addressing technological change: The challenge to social theory. *Current Sociology*, 50 (3), 347–363.
- Walker, K. (2000). It's difficult to hide it: The presentation of self on Internet home Page. *Qualitative Sociology*, 23, 99–120.
- Wall, M. A. (2007). Social movements and email: Expressions of online identity in globalization protests. *New Media & Society*, 9(2), 258–277.
- Walther, J. B. (2010) Computer-mediated communication. In C. R. Berger, M. E. Roloff, & D. R. Roskos-Ewoldsen (Eds.), *Handbook of communication science* (2nd ed., pp. 489–505). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Walther, J. B. (2011). Chapter 14: Theories of computer-mediated communication and interpersonal relation. In M. L. Knapp & J. A. Daly (Eds.), *The handbook of interpersonal communication* (4th ed., pp. 443–479). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Walzer, M. (1981). Philosophy and democracy. *Political theory*, 9(3): 379–399.

- Walzer, M. (1987). *Interpretation and social criticism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Walzer, M. (2002). *The company of critics: Social criticism and political commitment in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Basic Books.
- Wang, Z., Walther, J. B., & Hancock, J. T. (2009). Social identification and interpersonal communication in computer-mediated communication: What you do versus who you are in virtual groups. *Human Communication Research*, 35, 59-85.
- Warner, M. (1990). *The letters of the republic: Publication and the public sphere in eighteenth-century America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Warner, R. S. (1978). Toward a redefinition of action theory: Paying the cognitive element its due. *American Journal of Sociology*, 83(6), 1317–1349.
- Watts, J. (2003, Jan. 31). Technology and democracy is a potential mix in S. Korea. *Christian Science Monitor*, Section World, p. 8. Retrieved January 5, 2005 from http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AWNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=0F8E789C49300DFF&p_docnum=7&p_queryname=2
- Weber, M. (1970). Science as a vocation. In H. H. Gerth & C. W. Mills (Eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in sociology* (pp. 129–156). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul LTD. (Original work published in 1919)
- Weber, M. (1962). *Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology* (Vol. 1) (G. Roth & C. Wittich, Eds.). New York: Bedminster Press. (Original work published 1922)
- Weber, M. (1970). The social psychology of the world religions. In H. H. Gerth & C. W. Mills (Eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in sociology* (pp. 267–301). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul LTD. (Original work published 1922–3).
- Weber, M. (1992). *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. (T. Parsons, Trans.). New York: Routledge. (Original work published 1930)
- Welch, E. W. & Fulla, S. (2005). Virtual interactivity between government and citizens: The Chicago police department's citizen ICAM application demonstration case. *Political Communication*, 22(2), 215–236.
- Wellman, B. (2001). Physical place and cyberplace: The rise of personalized networking. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 25(2), 227–252.
- Wellman, B. (2004). The three stage of Internet studies: Ten, five and zero years ago. *New Media & Society*, 6(1), 123–129.

- Wellmer, A. (1998). Hannah Arendt on judgment: The unwritten doctrine of reason. In *Endgames: The irreconcilable nature of modernity essays and lectures* (pp. 291–311). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. (Original work published 1985).
- Wellmer, A. (2000). Arendt on revolution. In D. Villa (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Hannah Arendt* (pp. 220–241). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wells, K. M. (Ed.). (1995). *South Korea's minjung movement*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Wilhelm, A. G. (2000). *Democracy in the digital age: Challenges to political life in Cyberspace*. New York: Routledge.
- Williams, R. (1961). *The long revolution*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Williams, R. (1992). *Television: Technology and cultural form*. Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press. (Original work published 1974).
- Williams, R. (1977). *Marxism and literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Williams, R. (1980). *Problems in materialism and culture: Selected essays*. London: Verso.
- Willis, P. (1977). *Learning to labor*. New York: Colombia University Press.
- Wolin, S. S. (1994/1983). Democracy and the political. In S. K. Hinchman & L. P. Hinchman (Eds.), *Hannah Arendt: Critical essays* (pp. 289–306). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. (Original work published 1983)
- Wojcieszak, M. C. (2009). Carrying online participation offline: Mobilization by radical online groups and politically dissimilar offline ties. *Journal of Communication*, 59(3), 564–586.
- Wojcieszak, M. C. & Mutz, D. C. (2008). Online groups and political discourse: Do online discussion spaces facilitate exposure to political disagreement? *Journal of Communication*, 59(1), 40–56.
- Wright, S. & Street, J. (2007). Democracy, deliberation, and design: The case of online discussion forums. *New Media and Society*, 9(5), 849–868.
- Wyatt, R. O., Katz, E., & Kim, J. (2000). Bridging the spheres: Political and personal conversation in public and private spaces. *Journal of Communication*, 50(1), 71–92.
- Yagoda, B. (1993). *Will Rogers: A biography*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Yoon, S. (1997). Discourses of democratic communication and the archaeology of information technology in South Korea. In M. Bailie & D. Winseck (Eds.), *Democratizing communications: Comparative perspectives on information and power* (pp. 173–194). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

- Xenos, M. A. & Foot, K. A. (2005). Politics as usual, or politics unusual? Position taking and dialogue on campaign websites in the 2002 U.S election. *Journal of Communication*, 85(1), 169–185.
- Zaller, J. R. (1992). *The nature and origins of mass opinion*. New York: Cambridge.
- Zarefsky, D. (1986). The Lincoln-Douglas debates revisited: The evolution of public argument. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 72, 162–184.
- Zaret, D. (1992). Religion, science, and printing in the public spheres in seventeenth-century England. In C. Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere* (pp. 212–235). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Zaret, D. (2000). *Origins of democratic culture: Printing, petition, and the public sphere in Early-modern England*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Zelizer, B. (1990). Achieving journalistic authority through narrative. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*. 7(4), 366-376.
- Zelizer, B. (1993). Journalists as interpretive communities. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 10(3), 219-237.
- Zhou, Y. (2006). *Historicizing online politics: Telegraphy, the Internet, and political participation in China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.